

THE
LOST
CITY

SCREENPLAY BY

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"The invisible passes into visibility through our faith in it."

.....Ernest Holmes

FADE IN: TITLE: SAHARA DESERT, NEAR BECHAR ALGERIA

The mountain of Quarazazat eclipses the Sahara Desert. A surreal skyscraper suspended on a blanket of blue fog. White light bursts through the haze---the cosmic umbilical cord of the universe. It connects the invisible to our souls and helps us remember where we left our car keys.

EXT. SAHARA DESERT - RUINS NEAR BECHAR

Dusk falls upon GIANT WINGED GRIFFENS guarding the ruins of a 8000 year old Sumerian palace.

INT. UNDERGROUND RUINS DAY

Flashlights blaze through darkness. Water droplets trickle down a tunnel to a pool of water laying in a cul-de-sac. Footsteps squishing in mud.

A PAIR OF HANDS

hook up some wiring on a portable "optical scanner." This is DR. JOINER, an anorexic looking man, with dark hair and complexion, beads of perspiration dribbling down his face. Colors spiral out from the scanner. The monitor reads: SAMPLE FOUND. Joiner nervously marks the rock with chalk, and gives a thumbs up signal to DR. LUCAS, a tight-lipped man whose face is surrounded by a mane of white wavy hair.

A HIDEOUS LOOKING EYE

carved on the rock scares Dr. Joiner. He jumps back, knocking Lucas' flashlight out of his hands. It lights up a MEDUSSA-LIKE FIGURE OF SNAKES----a HALF ANCIENT URN wedged into the center of her mouth.

JOINER

Looks just like my mother-in-law.

Lucas flashlight hits the eyes of a giant hawk swooping down on them. KER!PLUNK! A jackal's carcass, swarming with giant red ants, lands at their feet.

JOINER

AAAAHHHHHHHHH!!!!

Suddenly, electrical arcs dance to the top of the tunnel from the optical scanner, followed by an explosion. When the smoke clears, the glowing urn falls to the ground.

JOINER

We've got it, Dr. Lucas! This
is it!.....

Lucas picks up the HALF URN, holding it in the light like a newborn infant. This is the moment he has long awaited.

LUCAS

Dr. Joiner, this urn will lead us
to the greatest discovery ever
known to man.

Lucas deposits the URN into his waist pouch. He removes two oxygen masks, hands one to Joiner - a nervous smile creasing Joiner's face as he takes it.

EXT. RUINS - DAY

Footsteps trudging through thick sand. Lucas and Joiner embrace, a rush of emotions flooding through them.

LUCAS

God keep you!

Together, they load their equipment on two horses, mount and head out, fast!

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Two tiny specs swiftly ride across the desert. The sun---a red ball of fire on the horizon.

CUT TO:

INT. MILITARY HEADQUARTERS - BIRKINA FASSO - W. AFRICA - DAY

Solid security door closes with a clunk. Military personnel enter, ready for orders. In a massive, leather armchair riveted with steel-polished nails is JOSEPH BUCHARA, his back to us.

Upstairs, in an observation tower is YASKA: a short, dumpy man with slicked back hair, spying through high-tech binoculars. He'd sell his own mother to save his ass. A girlie magazine sticks out of his hip pocket.

YASKA
 (over an intercom)
 They've got the urn, boss!

Large screen computer monitor downstairs (wired into the binoculars) runs a playback of the drama taking place 1500 miles away in the desert. Buchara whirls his chair around to watch. He is immaculately dressed, but wears too much jewelry. His left eye is hidden by a patch. Two statuesque ROYAL POODLES sit by his side.

Buchara holds the second HALF OF THE URN in his hands---we notice a ring with a bull's head and a jackal's body on his finger. He stares down at the DEVIL'S Tarot card.

BUCHARA
 Get the other half, then kill them.

With giant arms folded across a skull and crossbones t-shirt, BONES cracks a half smile. This is one tough bald son-of-a-bitch and Buchara's number one head crusher.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER

climbs above the sand swells - treacherous, fierce weaponry unmatched by any state of the art. Bullets blaze a trail between the horses' hooves. Joiner falls off his horse. The chopper moves in.

TWO PANEL DOORS ON THE BLACK HAWK OPEN

Heavier artillery. Instruments zero in on the target. A missile fires! Visibility is zero. The chopper cuts through the smoke.

Joiner remounts. He can barely see Lucas ahead. In a split second decision, Joiner takes off in the opposite direction. The Black Hawk re-directs its course for Joiner.

Lucas digs his heels into the horse's sides.

LUCAS
 Ha!!

Joiner stops, dismounts. He nervously holds up a black box with mirrored sides towards the sun, trapping the light.

INT./EXT. BLACK HAWK - DAY

The GUNNER is suddenly blinded by the reflecting sunlight, but fires anyway. KA BOOM! A missile explodes!

Joiner is caught in a whirlwind of sand and fumes. He's gone! Debris everywhere, the Black Hawk surveys the target for the half urn.

Lucas, racing under a flock of storks for cover, heads for the town of Bechar in the distance.

LUCAS

Ha!! Ha!!

The BLACK HAWK PILOT finds no sign of the urn at Joiner's site. The chopper roars out of the smoke heading across the desert after Lucas.

JOINER

digs his way out from a sandy mound, wearing the oxygen mask, and takes off running.

EXT. BORDER TOWN - BECHAR, ALGERIA - DAY

A caravan of camels approaches the town when, CRACK! Lucas' horse stumbles, plunging Lucas into their midst. The camel goes down, spilling tea crates onto the desert sand. Tempers flare!

An ARAB MERCHANT hits Lucas over the head. Bullets rip through the crowd from a SECOND BLACK HAWK. Military police invade the streets. Lucas vanishes into the chaos. The Black Hawks comb the panic-stricken city.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Lucas boards the train. Police rush past, whistles blowing.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Disguised in an ARAB ROBE, Dr. Lucas is approached by the train conductor. Police board the train, searching compartments.

A POLICEMAN

checks Lucas' empty cabin and calls the conductor over. The two men talk in Arabic with the conductor pointing to the washroom just as Lucas exits. The policeman demands to see I.D. from Lucas. A tense moment follows. The train whistle issues its last call---the agitated officer flings back the I.D. and leaves.

A THIRD BLACK HAWK CHOPPER

touches down. Polished black boots step out. It's Buchara.

SOLDIER

We've lost them, sir.

Buchara's temper is ready to ignite.

EXT. THE MOVING TRAIN - DAY

Joiner is running along side the train. Lucas, standing at an open door, reaches out to him---fearful it may be too late.

HANDS LOCK

perspiration separating them. Joiner feels a sinking feeling in his stomach, then gives it his last try. Joiner grabs on tight. Lucas pulls him into the train.

A MILITARY POLICEMAN

catches a glimpse of this out of the corner of his eye.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The Algerian train is speeding towards the Moroccan border. A MOROCCAN TRAIN, travelling in the opposite direction, is heading for the Algerian border. A Black Hawk Chopper sweeps over the Algerian train. Yaska is lowered down by cable. Bones and TWO more ARMED MILITARY GUARDS follow.

INT. ALGERIAN TRAIN - DAY

Yaska, Bones, and the two men search all compartments. They open a door---

INT. FIRST CLASS COMPARTMENT - DAY

An ARAB MAN is trying to convince his veiled wife to have sex.

ARAB MAN

I promise, it will only take a minute.

Bones issues a "grunt" as he slams the door shut.

INT. SECOND CLASS COMPARTMENT - DAY

Two sheep occupy the compartment with their OWNER. Yaska opens the door, and suddenly feels something warm on his foot - a sheep is peeing on it.

YASKA

I hate animals!

Bones' cackle is cut short by a slap from Yaska.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The two trains are about to cross paths.

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Buchara is at the train track control switch as he watches a monitor. The two trains approach the border.

INT. ALGERIAN TRAIN - FIRST CLASS COMPARTMENT - DAY

Yaska opens the door, weapons drawn, surprising Dr. Lucas and Joiner. The two armed guards move in behind them.

YASKA

Alright, you camel turds! Hand it over. Before I fill your dresses full of holes.

Realizing there's no way out, Lucas removes the urn from the pouch and reluctantly hands it over. Yaska sneers, waving his gun. Bones CRACKS! their heads together, then leaves.

EXT. ALGERIAN TRAIN - DAY

Yaska, Bones, and the two guards are airlifted back into the chopper. Yaska gives a "thumbs up" on a video transmitter.

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Buchara gives the order---

MAN AT CONTROLS

There are innocent people on that train....

BUCHARA

I know....

Buchara kills the man instantly with deadly pressure applied to his neck, then pushes the lever down as---

BOTH TRAINS

are switched to the same track, speeding towards each other.
KA BOOM!!! THE TRAINS COLLIDE HEAD ON!!!

DISSOLVE TO:

OPENING CREDITS:

EXT. HOUSE - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

A small Mediterranean style villa sits on a quiet hillside.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A sink full of dishes. Oven smoking! A smoke detector and tea kettle are blaring! A bulletin board is covered with movie memorabilia. On a TV MONITOR, a self-defense video plays---

VIDEO SELF-DEFENSE INSTR

Ahh! Haa! Ha! Remember, attack,
roll and scream!, to ward off your
attacker.....

DR. GINA KRAMER, late thirties, smart, driven, compulsive, wearing a Calvin Klein suit, rushes in; 130 lbs of vulnerable sexuality stuffed into 5'11" of hard-edged, cool exterior. Gina shuts the tea off, pulls a burnt chicken out of the oven. Tastes a piece. Throws it back.

GINA

Why do I even try?

Glasses on, she scribbles a note---"Dear Rosa, Sorry about the mess. Oven cleaner is under the sink. I'll order in. Thanks. Gina."

Rushing, Gina gathers up a pile of books. The INSTRUCTOR on the video demonstrates a position which Gina tries to imitate until she feels a slight pain in her back. The VIDEO image clicks off and a NEW WOMAN appears on screen w/clock: 8:50 a.m.

WOMAN (on TV)

Warning! You must leave within
thirty seconds, or you will be
late!

GINA

Shit!

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A red Alpha Romeo peels out the driveway, wheels squealing!

INT. BRADLEY DISEASE CONTROL - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

High tech glass building buzzing with activity - men and women wearing lab coats w/picture ID's. TV MONITORS are everywhere. A GUARD mans elaborate computerized security desk.

GINA slips an ELECTRIC KEY-CARD through a large steel door as she watches the guard watching her. It opens with a clunk.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Good morning, Dr. Kramer. You're late!

Balancing a half-eaten jelly donut in her mouth, coffee cup in hand, Gina snatches up a PACKAGE addressed to her, dropping the morning paper from the pile of books in her arms.

Gina bends over, frowning as she reads---"BODY OF SCIENTIST, DR. HARVEY LUCAS, FOUND IN TRAIN WRECKAGE IN BECHAR, ALGERIA."

The guard rushes over to pick up the paper, stealing a look up her dress. Gina trades the gooey donut for the paper, taking the guard's hand in hers, and with great satisfaction, smears jelly a-l-l o-v-e-r his face!

GINA

Thanks!

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Gina slips her KEY-CARD into another large steel door.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Biochemistry Research. Office
of.....(a blank stall)

Agitated, Gina jams the key-card into her purse, and enters a closet-sized office.

INT. BIOCHEMISTRY RESEARCH - DAY

Images of creepy, crawly bugs on a CD-ROM pop up on a computer screen. Zen Meditation music is playing.

KELLY, a well-toned, thirty-three year old black man, is sitting at a computer station strapped with earphones and a 3-D viewer, under a San Francisco Warrior's cap. He chants softly.

Gina busts through the door.

GINA

Damn it! My name still isn't on that door!

Kelly flies out of his seat. Gina dumps the books on the desk "Emmergence of New Diseases," next to a bottle of Maalox---her expression sullen.

GINA

It's been nearly six weeks. Have they even sent anybody up here?

Kelly nods "negative".

Gina slips on a lab coat with picture ID--- "Dr. Gina Kramer, Microbiologist."

Agitated, Gina plucks a HANDWRITTEN POST-IT NOTE off her computer screen---"Be like a pebble carried effortlessly through the stream of life."....Lao-tse. A drawing of a half sun and half moon facing each other, are at the bottom.

GINA

(to herself)

I'd rather be sailing.

(to Kelly)

Miss me?

KELLY

(singing)

You're the cream in my coffee...

you're the sole of my shoe....

(beat)

Thought you weren't due back 'til tomorrow?

Gina doesn't answer. LADY, a five year old Bassett Hound, with sweet droopy eyes approaches Gina, licking her hand. Affectionately, she pats the dog, feeding Lady a chocolate chip cookie.

KELLY

Oh! Somehow I get the feeling the love boat sank.

GINA

A vacation is a great way to end a relationship, Kelly.

KELLY

I knew he wasn't right for you.

GINA

Yeah, that's what my psychologist said.

Lady burbs.

GINA

(to the dog)

That's the thanks I get for saving her from Max Factor.

(turning to the computer)

Computer on.

On computer screen, PRO TECH data base logo appears: A DOUBLE-HEADED SNAKE. Pop up window reads: GENESIS PROJECT: 33,000 chromosomes accounted.

Gina doodles on the drawing of the half sun and half moon facing each other, waiting for the computer to load.

GINA

Oh, I don't know, Kelly, I just want a man who doesn't drink, smoke, or eat Fig Newtons in bed, and cares more about me than the NBA draft.

KELLY

You mean someone who's brave, strong, funny, honest, caring, and won't cheat on you.

GINA

Yeah!

KELLY

Yeah, you mean Betty White in Mel Gibson's body.

Gina smiles.

KELLY

Hey, almost forgot, "Saddam" wants to see you right away.

Kelly tosses her a note from Alan McCarthy, their boss.

GINA
Well, I'm not ready, yet.

Gina makes a bee line for the door.

GINA
He'll have to wait.

The door slams. Kelly shakes his head, worried.

INT. DISEASE CONTROL - LIBRARY - DAY

Flush with bank vault security and long walls of pristine white file cabinets.

POV: A PAIR OF GEORGEOUS LEGS

perched on a electronically operated ladder, reveal Gina searching through files. Beneath her is ALAN McCARTHY, a thirty year old small, yet demanding man who always speaks in monotone. His face turns beet red as he observes Gina's skirt hiked up to her bottom. In his hand, he is playing with a puzzle---two bent nails, impossible to untangle.

ALAN
Kelly's psychic abilities seem to be improving.

Gina pulls her skirt down, embarrassed.

GINA
Alan, you promised to have my name on my office door...

ALAN
Gina, I'm afraid Genesis is dead.

GINA
What do you mean dead?!!

Almost losing her grip, Gina feels the watchful eyes of---

TWO SECURITY GUARDS

and a room full of people now staring.

GINA
(quieter)
We're on the verge of a major breakthrough in genetic science...

Alan climbs aboard a neighboring ladder, waving scientific magazine covers in her face: "CELLS TALKING TO CELLS," "HOW YOUR CELLS PLAY RUSSIAN ROULETTE"...all by Dr. Gina Kramer.

ALAN

The directors feel these articles are an embarrassment.

(reading)

"Is Cancer Chaos in Your Cells?"

GINA

I was misquoted.

Gina presses a button on the ladder. WOOSH! She's gone!

ALAN

Come on, Gina....

ZOOM! Alan's ladder follows!

ALAN

Your team was to complete the DNA mapping of 35,000 chromosomes on genetic diseases. Now you're off on some tangent about cells talking to each other. The directors feel it's a little far-fetched.

CLONK! Gina suddenly runs her ladder into Alan's. Heads turn. Gina lowers her voice.

GINA

You've seen the results of the tests. You can't deny that they show evidence of some sort of intelligent behavior at the cellular level.

ALAN

Those tests could be just random coincidence.

SSS-CACK!...Gina pushes Alan's ladder against a corner. Everyone stares!

GINA

All I need is to figure out what tells the DNA to go off at a certain time to trigger a genetic disease. It's the big question! I just need a little more time, Alan.

ALAN

I'm afraid you've run out of time.
The directors have decided to cut
your funding.

The files in Gina's hands go crashing to the floor. Angry,
she climbs down the ladder to pick them up. Alan follows.

ALAN

That is...Unless you want to help
us out on something else.

Alan holds up the morning paper.

GINA

I know. Dr. Lucas and I worked
together at Harvard. It's
terrible.

Gina collects the files and marches for the door, all heads
turning in the room. Alan reluctantly follows.

ALAN

He was working on a special disease
control grant in India....
Compiling an encyclopedia of
ancient medical cures from
archaeological artifacts....

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

People in whitecoats are racing back and forth between steel
doors as Gina stomps down the hallway. Allan catches up.

ALAN

...Suddenly, his private collection
of artifacts disappears in India
along with some computer files and
he turns up dead in Algeria.
(cutting in front of her)
And I want you to find out why.

GINA

Me?! Come on, I'm not a spy, I'm a
scientist for Christ's sake!

ALAN

So far nobody's been able to hack
into Lucas' backup system. That's
why I want you to go.

GINA

Forget it! I'd look terrible in a
sari!

INT. ALAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Alan enters and throws his "bent nail" puzzle down on the desk, defeated. It lands beside a pair of plastic eyeballs. Gina walks over to the desk and picks up the nail puzzle.

GINA

Look, Alan, I've still got the weekend to finish my report for the board review on Tuesday. It's my last chance to convince the directors we still need Genesis.

Gina hands Alan back his puzzle---SOLVED, and turns on her heels.

ALAN

Let Kelly do the report.

GINA

Kelly can't do that kind of report alone.

ALAN

Sorry Gina, it's all I've got. Or, you're out of a job.

Gina stops. Turns back.

ALAN

Dr. Lucas' funeral is tomorrow.

The telephone video monitor clicks on - a very serious looking SECRETARY appears on screen. Alan shoves an airline ticket in Gina's hand.

BETTY

Your video conference call to India is on the line, sir.

ALAN

You can be back by Tuesday...with Lucas' files.

Gina picks up the plastic eyeballs, thinking.

ALAN

I'll put in a good word with the directors.

Gina realizes she's backed into a corner. PLUNK! She drops one of the eyeballs in Alan's coffee cup.

GINA
 (not happy)
 Yeah, and see if you can get me a
 raise with my name on the door,
 will you?

ALAN
 (smiling)
 See you Tuesday.

EXT. HALLWAY - BRADLEY DISEASE CONTROL - DAY

Gina pauses in the doorway. It dawns on her---

GINA
 I hate black!

INT. GINA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A telephone in her ear, Gina is packing.

GINA
 Yes, mother, I promise I won't talk
 to strangers. Love you. Yes..Yes.

She hangs up, peeved that her mother still treats her like a
 child. Kelly is painfully looking over a long TO DO list.

KELLY
 I see your mother still hasn't
 forgotten about that little
 incident in Mexico last year.

GINA
 Kelly, what would I do without you?

KELLY
 Probably be rotting in a Mexican
 jail.

GINA
 He was a very charming man. How
 was I to know that he was a Cartel
 king pin?

Kelly's eyes widen as Gina tosses a Derringer pistol in the
 suitcase next to the unopened package, some condoms, a
 Maalox bottle, roadside flares, etc.

Kelly picks up the Derringer.

GINA

In this day and age, a girl can't
be too careful.

EXT./INT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - NIGHT

Gina hurls herself out of a limo. Lady and Kelly follow. The wind nearly blows off Gina's "good luck" white Panama hat as she juggles a huge shoulderbag, and a BLACK BOX---portable, pocket size PC computer equipped with a TV screen and FLASHING clock: 5 MINUTES TO CHECK IN.

KELLY

(still looking at his "To
Do" list)

Another "lost" weekend. Only, this
time it won't be great sex.

GINA

KELLY, please make sure you input
that data while I'm gone so I can
finish the figures when I get back.

AT SECURITY

Kelly hands Gina a book on video tape---"Meditative thoughts
through Zen Buddhism".

KELLY

I know how you hate to fly.

GINA

(reading)

Orgasm, a trance state?

Lady licks Gina's hand. Gina hugs the dog affectionately
and takes off Lady's baseball cap.

GINA

Put a bow in her hair, will ya. My
shrink says she secretly wants to
be a boy.

Gina gives Kelly a hug, rushes through security.

KELLY

Some surrogate mom, you are.

EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

Kelly approaches the limo when KA BOOM!!! The car blows up!

KELLY
Holy, shiiit!!!

Lady tries to bolt from her leash. Kelly pulls her back.

KELLY
Hey you, I'm in charge now.

INT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

Worried, Kelly makes his way back into the terminal. No sign of Gina. He turns, bumping into THREE THUGS.

INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Gina views a picture of the sun and the moon on the BOOK VIDEO MONITOR. She reads: "the sun is a symbol of male energy and the moon is a symbol of female energy."

A STEWARDESS hands Gina a soft drink with a napkin---on it is the same symbol of the sun and the moon. Gina stares at the napkin, taken by the synchronicity of it, and stuffs it in her purse next to some prescribed sleeping pills.

CUT TO:

EXT. VARANASI - INDIA - NEXT DAY

Muddy streets are alive with clatter, music, pedestrians. An elaborate wedding ceremony parades through a throng of commoners, snake charmers, and beggars.

INT. TAXI - DAY

Hung over from the sleeping pills, Gina tries to floss her teeth and re-applies some makeup while checking her watch---

GINA
(to the driver)
Hurry, please!

Gina looks in the mirror. She tries to smooth out the lines of exhaustion under her eyes.

EXT. TEMPLE OF THE DEAD - GANGES RIVER - DAY

Gina approaches several hundred steps leading down to the banks of the Ganges river where a cremation ceremony is taking place.

Gina takes a deep breath, fearlessly trying to hold onto her suitcase and hat as she descends the treacherous stairs. ONE OF BUCHARA'S MEN, speaking into a cellular phone, follows.

EXT. GANGES RIVER BANK - DAY

A PRIEST scatters the ashes and says something in Hindu.

HINDU PRIEST (subtitled)
 Be like a pebble carried
 effortlessly through the stream of
 life.

A handful of people disperse, except for one unshaven man, SAM GALLAGHER, late 40's, standing very near the edge of the cremation platform. He looks like he wants to throw himself off. Gina clears her throat. No reaction.

GINA
 Did you know Dr. Lucas well?

As Sam tilts the end of a silver hip flask up, full of tequila, Gina gets a glimpse of his rugged face, dry and parched from the sun---a sense of anger and self-doubt in his steel blue eyes.

SAM
 I sent him to his death.

GINA
 What do you mean?

Sam whirls around. He likes what he sees.

SAM
 I'm the one who told him about that damn urn in the first place.

In Gina's case, only heros need apply---

GINA
 What urn?

SAM
 Look, I came here to pay my last respects.

Sam heads up the stairs. Gina follows, and hands him her card.

GINA

I'm Dr. Gina Kramer with U.S. Disease Control. Dr. Lucas was working on a very important project.

SAM

Yeah, I know all about it.

GINA

Then maybe you can tell me what happened to his files?

SAM

(cutting in)

Look, babe, I'm out of this business.

Clunk! Gina drops her suitcase on a step---ready for war.

GINA

Exactly what kind of business are you in, babe??!!

Sam glances back at her over his shoulder, and PING! A bullet ricochets off the stairs. Sam dives for cover, crushing Gina under him. Ping! Ping! more bullets. Panic stricken, Gina reaches for the suitcase.

SAM

Leave it!

Arms outstretched, she nearly gets the case, but wowwoooo!!! Sam yanks her away. Dodging more bullets, they make a dash for the top of the stairs.

Buchara, Yaska, Bones, and their henchmen climb out of a boat docking below, guns firing. Yaska races up the stairs, screaming after them.

YASKA

(lying)

Hey, they stole my dead mother's ashes. Stop them!!!

AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

a HINDU MAN grabs Gina. Wham! Instinctively, she hits the man with a karate kick, then a round house. Sam is thunderstruck! So is Gina!

Sam directs Gina into his 1940's style big black Cadillac. The car takes off with a JERK!, bullets racing overhead. In the commotion, Gina doesn't notice the car door is ajar.

INT. SAM'S CADILLAC - DAY

Sam pulls a gun out of the glove box---

SAM
Do you wanna get shot?!

GINA
(scared!)
No!!!

SAM
Then get down, damn it!!!

THE CADILLAC

swerves through the streets trying to avoid a hodgepodge of humanity, nearly missing a sacred cow!

SAM
Holy cow!

EXT. STAIRS - DAY

Buchara and his men trample through a mob of angry Hindus and pile into TWO SEPARATE TAXIS - slugs flying!

INT. SAM'S CADILLAC - DAY

GINA
Jesus! What'd you do, rob a bank?

SAM
Look, if I hadn't been talking to you, I wouldn't be here now.

GINA
Me?! They're not shooting at me!

PING! A bullet sizzles past Gina's ear. Gina panics.

SAM
Well, there's one way to find out.

Gina's eyes widen. The cadillac rounds a corner, hits a bump, the car door pops open, and SLURP! Gina's scarf is sucked out the door. She lunges for it---

GINA
OOOHHHHH!!!!!!

The door swings open. Frozen with fear, Gina is hanging on by her fingernails as the car jolts across a wide rickety old wooden bridge; below is a 500 foot drop to the river.

INT. SAM'S CADILLAC - DAY

Driving and dodging bullets, Sam lunges for the door.

SAM
Women! Nothin' but bad luck!

Relieved but still mad, Gina lands in Sam's lap as he pulls the door shut, the scarf flying in his face.

GINA
This happens to be an Armani you're willing to sacrifice to the river gods.

A bundle of nerves, Gina snaps up the scarf and flings it around her neck.

EXT. SAM'S CADILLAC - DAY

The right front wheel of the Cadillac nearly swerves off the bridge.

Behind, the first taxi carrying Buchara's HENCHMEN hits the bumper on the Cadillac, pushing it forward with a jolt. TWO HENCHMEN climb out the taxi window onto the hood and jump!--right onto the back of the Cadillac. Henchman #1 climbs in through the driver's side back window.

AN OX AND CART

pulls out in front of the two taxis following the Cadillac and WHAM! Smoke and fumes fill the air.

Buchara, with crazed eyes, climbs out of the wreckage beside his men, Bones and Yaska.

INT./EXT. CADILLAC - DAY

Henchman #1 straddles Sam from behind, choking him. Gina fights off henchman #2---

GINA
Told you, it's you they want!

Henchman #2 grabs Gina's scarf, pulling on it as he climbs through the window. Gina chokes!

CRRAACK! Gina whacks her attacker's fingers with her shoe. Outside, he doubles back across the back of the car to the driver's rear window.

Gina raises her shoe, aiming for Henchman #1, still strangling Sam. The henchman ducks. BAM! Gina makes an error and bops Sam on the head.

SAM

Him, not me, damn it!

Sam's Henchman has Sam's arm twisted---gun pointing at Sam's mouth. The Henchman cocks the trigger. Sam desperately struggles with it, bending the gun just past his ear and---

PING!

Sam shoots the other henchman climbing in through the back window. He dies. WHOP! Gina cold cocks Sam's attacker who passes out. Gina is shocked at her new and improved skills.

EXT. CADILLAC - DAY

Ahead, the road turns. An uphill embankment sends the car flying---BAM! It lands with a crash! The unconscious henchman flops out the door. A car from behind flattens him with a crunch!

INT. CADILLAC - HOURS LATER

The car drives past a sign - CITY OF UDAIPUR, INDIA. Sam stops the car. Gina is frantic.

GINA

You almost got us killed, you know!

SAM

I just saved your life. I don't know what you're up to lady, but you're not selling vitamins.

Worried, Gina ignores him.

SAM

(opens the car door)
There's a police station two blocks down on your left. Sorry, men with guns scare the shit out of me.

Gina steps out of the car, and finds herself standing---

KNEE DEEP

in a mud puddle. Feeling bad about that, Sam pulls the door shut, giving her a nod as he drives off.

SAM

Have a nice life!

Next to the mud puddle, Gina notices a card laying on the ground. CARD READS: "Samuel H. Gallagher, Archaeologist, No. 21 Rue de Saint Marc, Quagadougou, Birkna Fassou, West Africa." Gina snatches up the card and heads down the street. Sam's car disappears in the distance.

Buchara and his men pull up in another taxi. They spot Gina. Yaska gives the signal to follow. A sadistic look sweeps Buchara's face.

BUCHARA

No. Leave her. She may be useful.

INT. DISEASE CONTROL - UDAIPUR - INDIA - DAY

A TURBANED MAN wearing a walkman with headphones, is seated behind a counter, his back to Gina. Gina is on the telephone next to him.

GINA

(screaming)

No, Alan, I haven't! I've been shot at, strangled....(looking at her muddy clothes) trapped in a runaway car with the man from hell...

Approaching the counter from behind, a charming, reassuring voice with a slight British accent asks -

ROLF (O.S.)

May I help you? I'm the director of the Center, Rolf Lawrence.

Gina swings around, and finds herself facing a real ladies' man of unbelievably good looks. ROLF is charismatic, tender-hearted, full of potential though undisciplined - a man with lofty goals that often turn out to be beyond his reach. Rolf flashes Gina a bewitching smile. Her eyes lock with his.

INT. BIOCON HEADQUARTERS - BIRKINA FASSO - W. AFRICA - DAY

An extremely elaborate and high tech pharmaceutical manufacturing plant. DNA modules hang in mid-air below security surveillance cameras.

IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM

the BOARD OF DIRECTORS (some in robes, some in suits) and a GOVT. MINISTER are seated around a high tech conference table encircled by an illuminated map of the world. Above them is a skylight dome. One wall is a giant aquarium. Bones lurks nearby in the shadows beside the Royal poodles.

BUCHARA

You'll be happy know, gentlemen, we have acquired the perfect biological weapon.

Buchara flashes an icy smile as he feeds the dogs small fish.

DIRECTOR #1

What makes you so sure the Americans won't find an antidote?

BUCHARA

Our laboratories have put together a deadly cocktail of every disease known to man. It would take years to pinpoint its origins.

DIRECTOR #2

You mean, you don't even know its origins.

BUCHARA

Exactly. Since the strain itself has now mutated into something even deadlier than its genesis.

MINISTER

And the effects?

Conference room chairs swivel around to face a WALL TO WALL video screen which reveals a MAN strapped in a chair, dying in extreme pain.

BUCHARA

The body temperature rises rapidly. Its victim's brain literally burns up from the fever.

DIRECTOR #3

How do you plan to distribute it?

The video screen provides visuals of a water company factory---designer labels on the bottles say---"OASIS SPARKLING WATER".

BUCHARA
Bottled water.

ON THE MAP

Buchara pinpoints his shipping route.

BUCHARA
We have three thousand contaminated bottles ready for transport to Delhi via a German shipping company.

In the aquarium behind them, a Lion fish loudly sucks up a walking Scooter Bleeny.

DIRECTOR #1
Clever. We will have declared war without firing a shot. Yes, I like it.

Buchara nods yes. There is a stir in the room.

DIRECTOR #3
It's a mistake to test this thing on our brothers of Islam!

Buchara is growing impatient. He points to Birkina Fasso on the map.

BUCHARA
I'm afraid you're forgetting how our brothers betrayed us during the Gulf War! Without oil, we are nothing to them.

DIRECTOR #2
I don't like it! Thousands of innocent people could die.

BUCHARA
True.

Buchara looks over at the Govt. Minister.

BUCHARA
I presume we do not have a problem with the Prince? Considering the cure will make him rich beyond his wildest dreams.

The Minister nods "affirmative."

MINISTER

He is still in the south of France,
but I spoke to him today, myself.

DIRECTOR #1

And what about this ancient remedy?
Do you have it?

BUCHARA

I will. As soon as my men join
together the two halves of that
ancient urn.

ON THE VIDEO SCREEN

Yaska is seen in a separate room, trying to fit together the
two halves of the ancient URN.

BUCHARA

Its hieroglyphics provide an
ancient recipe for the cure to any
disease.

Bullets of perspiration are streaming down Yaska's face as
he continues to struggle to fit the two halves together.

BUCHARA

Something powerful enough to make
even the blind see.

The room stirs again.

DIRECTOR #4

Just how much do you expect to sell
this remedy for?

YASKA

looks up at the TV CAMERA, his face stricken with terror as
he scans the two halves of the urn under an infra-red light
which interprets the hieroglyphics.

ON ONE HALF OF THE URN, A MESSAGE IS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH!

BUCHARA

Gentlemen, once we release this on
the Americans, we will be able to
name our own price.

Yaska walks into the conference room, careful not to step on a fish one of the dogs is playing with. The dog growls. Yaska makes a face, but the dog snaps back and sends Yaska running on his toes to Buchara---nervously, he whispers in Buchara's ear.

YASKA

Boss, something is wrong!

Buchara examines the printout which reads: "GO FUCK YOURSELF."

BUCHARA

It appears the half urn recovered from Dr. Lucas's laboratory is a fake.

With a cold, calculating gleam in his eye, Buchara slowly approaches a dark curly-haired MAN seated at the table - their eyes lock.

BUCHARA

(to the dark-haired man)

You idiot! You stole a fake!!

Buchara presses a button. A mechanical arm shoots up from the table, locking the unfortunate man in a chokehold---a trap door in the floor opens up, sucking him into A PIT OF SCORPIONS.

CLUNK! The trap door closes as the dying man issues a bloody scream!!!!!!!

BUCHARA

It's what I call my "love it or leave it" plan, gentlemen. That is what happens to traitors. Pity. I liked Marco.

Buchara's eyes ignite with desire.

BUCHARA

(to Yaska)

Get me the other half of that urn!

EXT. LAKE PALACE HOTEL - DINING TERRACE - INDIA - NIGHT

Rising up from the placid waters of Lake Pichola, the hotel resembles a floating palace. The night air is dreamy. Magical. Indian music drifts up from a tourist show below.

HEADS

turn as Gina approaches a table. Feeling uncomfortable in her sari, she tugs at the side.

Rolf surprises her from behind as he slides her seat out, then WHISPERS -

ROLF
Don't worry, you look quite lovely.

He unhooks her veil, revealing her soft lips---

ROLF
...But this is India, not Saudi Arabia.

Embarrassed, she laughs. A passing WOMAN flirts with Rolf. He lowers his eyes, looking at Gina.

GINA
(fidgeting with the sari)
It's a little out of my league.

ROLF
May I join you?

GINA
(inviting him to sit)
This is a coincidence.

His eyes lock with hers, sparks flying, though Gina doesn't believe in coincidences.

ROLF
This happens to be my favorite restaurant.

Rolf snaps his fingers for the WAITER---carrying Champagne. Gina covers her glass.

GINA
I'll have a seven up, please.

ROLF
(to the waiter)
The same.
(beat)
How long do you expect you'll be staying in India?

Gina is hesitant to answer. A sexy female MIDGET winks at Rolf as she passes by. He looks away, bashfully.

GINA
Until tomorrow night. Just routine business.

ROLF

It's odd that Alan didn't tell me you were coming.

GINA

Let's not talk about work.

(beat)

How long have you been in India?

He laughs.

ROLF

Forever. I was employed at a hospital in Delhi for six years. Then, a few years ago, I took a position as a lab consultant with Bradley Research. My wife and I...

Gina nearly chokes drinking some water.

GINA

Oh, you're married?

ROLF

I was for eighteen years. But she went back to England two years ago.

(resentful)

She felt more comfortable there. Family money.

Rolf glances down at a silver dollar which he nervously twirls in his hand.

GINA

So what made you stay?

ROLF

There's an old Zen/Hindu saying, "be like a pebble carried effortlessly through the stream of life."

GINA

(raising an eyebrow)

You don't really believe that?

Suddenly, a MONKEY jumps into Gina's lap. EEK!!!! EEK!!!

GINA

Wowooo!!!!

Upset, Rolf tries to get rid of the monkey.

GINA

It's o.k., It's cute.

The monkey slips Gina a fortune cookie with the fortune sticking out. It reads: "THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS COINCIDENCE."

On the back of the back of the fortune is a handwritten note---"Meet me at the train station tomorrow at noon. I'll be wearing dark glasses and a yellow hat...Cortney Dare, Dr. Lucas' assistant."

Gina glances around the restaurant.

ROLF

They are untouchables. Please, get rid of it.

An ORGAN GRINDER approaches and takes the monkey. Surprised at Rolf's reaction, Gina teases him.

GINA

What about me? Does that make me untouchable, now?

Their eyes lock again, the voltage turned up.

EXT. THE LAKE - A LITTLE LATER

Rolf, a giant of a man who towers over Gina, walks beside her under moonlight.

ROLF

Shocking news about Dr. Lucas, isn't it?

ROLF

He was an exceptionally gifted scientist, but kept his work secret.

GINA

Yes. Yes, he did.

ROLF

Did you know him?

GINA

Yes. He was a strange man, though.

ROLF

In what way?

GINA

I don't know, he believed in some mystical force that guides our lives. That the universe worked according to some master plan.

Gina turns, Rolf ready to take her in his arms.

ROLF

Perhaps he was right. Perhaps your work is not the only reason you were called to India.

Their lips are nearly touching, when---

Beep! Beep! Beep! Gina's beeper goes off. As she reaches down, the note falls on the floor. Rolf picks up the note, ready to kiss Gina as he hands it to her.

GINA

I've got an early morning.

Gina is suddenly gone.

INT. GINA'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

On the bed, is a fax: "DON'T KISS ANY TOADS. YOU MIGHT WAKE UP AND FIND OUT HE'S REALLY A TOAD! JUST KIDDING!! WORKING HARD. KELLY." Gina chuckles.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Bones, wearing Kelly's S.F. Warrior's cap, tips the BELLBOY who delivered the note.

INT. BRADLEY RESEARCH CENTER - UDAIPUR - INDIA - DAY

The lab is large, sterile, and extremely high tech, consisting of light and electron microscopy, with laser optical scanners using high resolution imagery for the study of disease evolution and potential cures.

OVERHEAD---

a plaque reads: "THE PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO EVOLVE CONSCIOUSNESS UNTIL IT BECOMES ONE WITH THE LIGHT WHICH CREATED IT." A picture of HARVEY LUCAS at an archaeological dig is on the desk.

MANICURED FINGERS race across computer keyboard.

WIDER

on Gina, operating the equipment. She is wearing a stylish, newly purchased white pantsuit. She sneezes and takes the napkin (with the sun and moon logo on it) from the airplane out of her handbag.

GINA

O.k., Lucas, let's see if you're still dyslexic.

Gina types: "LOGOS." Nothing. Gina types: "SO LOG."
 Message appears: "SEE SNAKES." Gina doodles on the napkin, scrambling the letters in "snakes" backwards---SEK ANS.
 Gina writes: "SEEK ANSWER", then types it on the computer.

A NEW MESSAGE APPEARS: "SEE SIGN".

Gina doodles on the napkin again. She writes...see sign? enegs...gene...genes..iss...is...sis...GENESIS! Bingo!
 Gina types in: GENESIS. Message appears: "BACKUP FILES BEING ACCESSED."

GINA

You sly devil.....

Gina looks down at the napkin, the words "SEE SIGN" written across the face of the sun and the moon.

On a wide screen computer monitor, visuals pop up with simultaneous computer voice: Faces of large round-eyed, black-haired people who look like they are wearing goggles.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Year 3000 B.C. Subject: Ancient Sumerians. Origins: Not known. Data: First civilization on earth.

A magnificent pyramid-shaped temple with a hundred steps leading up to its entrance.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Subject: Sumerian temple-tower known as Ziggurat. Use: Religious Shrine. Dedicated to ancient Healing Goddess.

Strange looking hieroglyphics.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Subject: written records which depict the destruction of the temple. Reason: not known. The holy urn is stolen, and the "Book of The Shrine" is removed. It is never recovered.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN

a message flashes: "SEE PAM". Gina types PAM.
Message appears: "FILE DELETED"!

Rolf walks up from behind, watching the computer screen.

ROLF
Need some help?

Startled, Gina whirls around, her chest heaving. Rolf is about to kiss her. She backs away and clears the computer screen, checks her watch - 11:45 a.m.

GINA
Damn you're gorgeous, but I have to go!

Gina rushes out the door leaving Rolf hanging---this is the first woman he's never been able to pin down.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - 12:15 P.M.

Steam fills the air - voices yacking in Hindi. The station is a madhouse. Impatiently, Gina paces up and down, wearing a Pith Helmet w/Hermes scarf. She is about to leave, when--

OUT OF A PUFF OF SMOKE

a short, fat MAN wearing a woman's yellow floppy hat and dark glasses walks towards her. He scrutinizes Gina closely as he passes. At the last possible moment, Gina asks:

GINA
Mr. Dare?

This is CORTNEY DARE, 250 lbs. of potential hysteria. He worries about everything from global warming to giant microbes stalking the earth. Disaster lurks everywhere, and he would do anything to avoid anxiety. Nervously, he pops two pills in his mouth, checking over his shoulder.

CORTNEY
We can't talk here.

EXT. STREET - INDIA - DAY

A RED VW BUG swerves out of a side street littered with carts, animals, and peasants.

INT. VW BUG - DAY

Like a sardine, Cortney is squashed at the wheel.

CORTNEY

Before Lucas left for Algiers, he had a feeling he was being watched. And he was. The day he died, the lab was broken into.

Cortney misses a rag-seller's cart by a fraction of an inch.

GINA

Hey, watch out!!! By whom?

He avoids the near collision, heading straight for another. Gina is a nervous wreck.

CORTNEY

We don't know. I'm the one who stole his files...
(looking at her)
But you've got to promise to get me out of this piss hole...alive.

WHOOSH!!!!!! The VW dangerously swerves by several more near misses!

GINA

Can't we stop somewhere?

Gina closes her eyes. The VW smashes into a bird seller's stand---

FEATHERS

and exotic birds scatter everywhere. Cortney gets out of the car, trying to offer an angry HINDU some money. The Hindu man pushes the money away; he wants more and summons a POLICEMAN.

CORTNEY

(to Gina)
The negotiations went bad. Let's get out of here!

Gina and Cortney make a mad dash on foot.

THE POLICEMAN blows his whistle. MORE INDIAN POLICEMEN appear on the scene. The chase is on!

INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Bones is talking to Buchara on the phone.

BUCHARA (V.O.)

Follow them. But don't kill
them...yet.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Indian police open fire on Cortney and Gina. Cortney
directs Gina down another street when---

A GROUP OF POLICE

round the corner, running into a sea of fluorescent pink and
yellow saris nearly blinding them as the ladies of Jaipur
flood into the street. No sign of their targets so they run
past, right into---

A WAGON

with a moving haystack. Not to be taken for fools, the
police stab it with a pitchfork, surprising an old man with
his young lover.

CORTNEY

heads down another alley, sweating in a pink sari. Gina
follows, in a yellow sari.

THE POLICE

accidentally bump into BONES, arms crossed. They smile
sheepishly and run away.

A poorly dressed DENTIST at the next corner is getting ready
to pull a MAN's tooth out with a string. Indian police
circle the corner, eyes squinting, as they watch the dentist
yank the string.

MAN

AAAhhhhhh!!!!!!!!!!

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - DAY

A TOOTHLESS SMILE

reflects in the mirror as Cortney massages his jaw. He pops
some pain killers.

Gina is wearing the dentist's clothes, standing in front of
a small bronze statue of the Indian goddess "Kumari"---a
LUNAR crescent carved at the statue's feet, a half solar SUN
carved above her head. A curtain hangs behind the goddess
where incense burns.

ISMAIL, a small, dark man with a moustache, who carries himself with an alien-otherness quality, is busy with customers.

CORTNEY

Ismail, Gina. Gina, Ismail.

Ismail nods. MELIK, Ismail's daughter of ten, appears and escorts them to the back of the shop, through a small courtyard. Melik is timid, naturally beautiful, a flame burns deep in her eyes. She exchanges glances with Gina and Gina gets a feeling something is wrong.

IN THE BACK ROOM

Melik brings tea, watching Gina like a hawk. Cortney nervously drinks the tea, pops two more pills, and begins to eat everything off a fruit platter sitting on the table.

GINA

(to Cortney)

Would someone mind telling me
what's going on here?

Cortney waddles over to a secret panel and presses a button. Panel doors open, revealing a hidden laboratory. On one wall are some glass enclosed shelves. The real HALF URN is inside a locked case, which he opens, then sets the urn on the table while still eating.

Gina gives a quizzical look. Cortney winks.

CORTNEY

Dr. Lucas gave me this for
safekeeping.

(beat)

According to an inscription on that
urn, it predicts a terrible, deadly
disease will inherit the earth.

A scrappy looking DOG sniffs at something in Cortney's back pocket.

Strange hieroglyphics decorate the URN beside carvings of a MOUNTAIN, the SUN and the MOON (the same ones Gina has been encountering). Cortney hands Gina Dr. Lucas' computer printouts.

CORTNEY

It's ancient Sumerian. Lucas was
the only one who know how to read
this stuff.

Cortney continues to feed his face with the dog sniffing his back pocket.

CORTNEY

His printouts show there is also some kind of ancient cure, supposedly capable of curing anything...but then it breaks off.

GINA

Maybe Lucas left a hidden code in one of his files about the cure.

CORTNEY

Nada...

Ismail walks in and points to where the inscription breaks off.

ISMAIL

We think Dr. Lucas was killed trying to recover the other half of the urn, which could possibly lead to the cure.

Ismail passes Gina the urn. Gina studies the urn, tracing the lines of what appears to be a map, then she looks at Lucas' computer printout: see PAM.

GINA

Wait a minute....

CORTNEY

(chewing)

It's not as far fetched as it seems...

GINA

No wait! See PAM. Dr. Lucas did leave a message in his computer. If you reverse it, it spells MAP.

Stunned, they exchange heated glances.

CORTNEY

Yeah. But only half a map without the other half of the urn.

Gina looks at Lucas' printout again---a word, "Quarzazat" is written next to a hieroglyphic that looks like a mountain.

GINA

"Quarzazat". One of Lucas' files mentioned something about a mountain and some kind of temple tower.

ISMAIL

Lucas believed that the Sumerians discovered a living cell that has human-like intelligence.

Gina's mouth drops open.

ISMAIL

He thought it was hidden in that temple. And there's only one man alive I know of who can help you find it.

Ismail refers to a picture of Sam, Melik and Ismail together on the desk.

Gina's jaw tightens stifly.

GINA

We've met. Not exactly a white knight, is he?

CORTNEY

(with a mouthfull)

One tough son-of-a-bitch, from what I heard.

ISMAIL

So you will pursue Dr. Lucas' work?

Cortney gets up. The dog has stolen a smashed hamburger from his back pocket. The dog growls. Cortney puffs up his chest, growls back....and sends the dog yelping!!!!

GINA

This whole thing sounds pretty far-fetched to me. Look, if I don't fly back to San Francisco tonight, I'm out of a job.

Gina picks up the urn to leave. Melik, who has been listening, removes Gina's empty tea cup, drops it and runs out crying. Ismail and Cortney exchange glances.

ISMAIL

Melik is going blind. Lupus disease.

(beat)

Our only hope is to find a cure as soon as possible or she will die before her eleventh birthday. Please, stay. Help us.

A frown knits Gina's brow. Ismail gestures for her to follow Melik.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

As Gina walks up, she finds Melik sobbing.

GINA
I'm sorry. I didn't know.

MELIK
Every day I pray to the goddess
Kurmari...that she will send
someone to help me.

Teary-eyed, Melik looks deep into Gina's eyes.

MELIK
I know you are the one. Please, I
don't want to die.

The girl throws herself into Gina's arms. Tears begin to
well in Gina's eyes as she holds the girl closely.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - DAY

Incense burning. Ismail is praying at the foot of a statue
of the goddess Kumari. Gina walks in, and Ismail speaks, as
though he is reading her thoughts.

ISMAIL
Einstein said, "the ultimate
science is nature, and the ultimate
scientist is the cosmic
intelligence."
(turning to her)
He understood..... that we are all
linked with one source. Trust it,
and you will be shown the truth.

Suddenly Gina feels an inner connection, a deep knowing that
somehow Ismail is right.

EXT. DOOR - DAY

Cortney has his ear pressed to the door; a smile creasing
his chubby face.

EXT. AIRPORT - UDIAPUR - NIGHT

A taxi pulls up, Rolf gets out first holding the door for
Gina. He offers his hand for assistance.

A BEGGAR approaches. Rolf gives him a twenty. Gina smiles,
admiringly.

ROLF

I believe in helping those who
can't help themselves.

They rush inside. Rolf buys some flowers from a vendor.

INT. AIRPORT - UDIAPUR - NIGHT

ROLF

I was hoping I could talk you into
staying.

He hands her the flowers. Gina is overcome with emotion.

GINA

Just when I find a good man, it's
time to go.

THEIR LIPS

touch, his strong arms gently pulling her towards him. In a whirlwind of passion, Rolf kisses her, the intensity rising, then, afraid, Gina releases herself and slips away.

Rolf stares longingly after her as she waves, the wheels in his head turning.

INT. TERMINAL - NIGHT

Gina elbows her way towards the TWA gate, boarding for San Francisco. She's late.

In line ahead, a group of twelve year-old INDIAN CHILDREN on a student exchange program, remind her of Melik. Gina silently listens to their playful laughter. Suddenly, she's gone.

INT. ANOTHER TERMINAL - NIGHT

Gina is at the West African Air counter, changing her ticket to Birkin Fasso, W. Africa. In her hand is Sam's card.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

All we see is a man's hand on the phone, wearing a jackal/bull's head ring. The voice is muffled.

MAN

(O.S.)

She's got the urn. And she's
headed for Gallagher's.

EXT. BIO-CON HEADQUARTERS - QUAGADOUGOU - W. AFRICA

On a speaker phone---

BUCHARA

Good. If my men fail to get the
urn, Dr. Kramer will be forced to
bring it to me.

Buchara hangs up, dangling a slab of fresh meat in front of
the royal poodles. Viciously, the dogs snap it up,
fighting! Buchara revels in watching the battle.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

A group of freight trucks pull up to a German airplane.
Crates of "OASIS BOTTLED WATER" are hoisted onto the plane.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - QUAGADOUGOU, BIRKINA FASSO - W. AFRICA - DAY

Dodging heavy traffic, street hawkers, and African women
balancing baskets on their heads, Gina skims the morning
paper. HEADLINES READ: "Thousands afflicted in Delhi from
mysterious fever."

A RUNAWAY TRUCK

barrells down on Gina, crossing the street. She doesn't see
it coming. Nearly too late, a round-faced black man MAN
pushes her out of the way! Gina turns to thank the man, but
he's gone! Relieved, but worried Gina hobbles down the
street unaware that Bones is following.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - QUAGADOUGOU - NIGHT

A series of numbers are punched in on a video screen
telephone.

GINA

Come on, Kelly! Where are you!

Empty Chinese take-out is sitting on the bed. An open
Fortune cookie reads: "YOUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON YOUR
INTUITION. TRUST IT." Gina places her Derringer pistol
into a thin strap-on holster under her skirt.

GINA

Guess this is one of those little
emergencies.

No answer. She clicks off the screen, makes a face as she gulps down some tea---slamming the door behind her.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Glancing over her shoulder, Gina climbs into a rented jeep. Bones follows in another car.

EXT. NATIONAL PARK - NIGHT

A blaze of torches light up the sky. Beyond this, a group of WEST AFRICANS in costumes with outrageously flamboyant headdresses, are dancing barefoot to the pounding throb of fast beating drums.

THE JEEP

pulls up. Gina gets out. Bones follows as Gina asks an AFRICAN MAN for directions. The African guides her to a banquet area where--

SAM---

shirtless and unshaven, is having tequila poured down his throat, then it is sprayed all over his face.

SAM

Yeah!!!

Vigorously he shakes his head---eyes flashing on a tall, lanky AFRICAN MAN with buffed shoulders and piercing eyes. Sam smiles smugly. Wham! the African slams fifty bucks down. Sam smacks a hundred on top.

A WILD CRY rises up from the crowd! Fast and furious, bets are placed as Sam staggers over to a two-by-four positioned lengthwise across a wide open pit. Cautiously, he places a Bowie knife in his mouth and a full shot glass on the end.

Barefoot, he starts across the two-by-four, his path a blur in front of him.

AFRICAN MAN #1

He's crazy, man!

THE SHOT GLASS

shimmies as Sam gracefully steps across the board with the skill of a trapeze artist, then glancing nervously at---

THE PIT BELOW

---a wild boar issues a ferocious snort. Sam totters. The crowd gasps.

His glance darts from the boar to the two-by-four---

Perspiration oozing down his cheeks. Painfully, he lifts one foot slightly off the board. Steadies himself. The boar makes another pass. Sam stiffens up, watching the shot glass dance towards the knife tip.

UUGGGHHHH!!!! the boar rams the two-by-four. It cracks---

SAM'S LEG

falls into the pit, the boar charges and---

Woosh! Sam hops to the end with the shot glass still positioned on the edge of the knife. The winners cheer!!!

Gleaming with self-satisfaction, Sam gives the African a consolatory slap on the back.

SAM

Don't worry, my man, you're sure to catch me drunk enough one of these days.

Everyone laughs. Sam is showered with congratulations. He pours another drink, slams it down like a drunken pirate and kisses a beautiful AFRICAN WOMAN.

SAM

Welcome to the Festival of the Wild!

Guns ready, Gina puts on her best disapproving scowl which Sam happens to catch out of the corner of his eye---

SAM

Oh, shit!

He downs the tequila and, with a kind of cool animal magnetism, moves in on Gina.

SAM

What'd you do, make a pact with the devil to ruin my life?

Closer, he moves, stalking his prey.

SAM

Why don't you let your hair down!
(lighting a cigarette)
Have a drink!....

Breathing down her neck, he cocks a seductive smile, full of arrogance. Gina snaps her gaze away, nauseated by his breath.

GINA
 (through clenched teeth)
 I don't drink, thank you!

Embarrassed, Sam puffs up his chest and moves on, sprinkling Gina with tequila as he towel dries off his hair. Gina moves away, the slit in her dress rising slightly above the thigh. Sam notices as he collects money from the losers.

GINA
 Listen, Gallagher!...

SAM
 There's a Ph.D. attached to that name which has earned me a lot of respect.

Time to go for the jugular---

GINA
 I assume you didn't get it mud wrestling with wild boars...

SAM
 You know, I've had just about enough of you, babe.

Clank! He bangs his glass on the table, downs another shot and wipes the excess off with the back of his hand, still collecting money.

GINA
 It's Gina Kramer, and there's a Ph.D. attached to that name, too!
 (beat)
 I came here to tell you Ismail's daughter is going blind. She has Lupus disease.

Sam's expression suddenly becomes sober.

SAM
 (to everybody)
 That's enough. Go on, get out!
 (to Gina)
 Look, I don't know what Ismail told you about me or the mountain...

Like a caged animal---

SAM
 (yelling)
 But if you've got any ideas about trying to find it, you better forget it.

GINA

Listen Sam, we need your help!

SAM

Well, you've come to the wrong place! I'm not goin' back!

Eye to eye---

GINA

What is it you're afraid of?

SAM

You scientist types think you've got the meaning of life all wrapped up in a little plastic test tube, don't ya?

(in her face)

Well let me tell you, there are some things that can't be explained by science!

GINA

Right now, it looks like you think the meaning of life lies at the bottom of a tequila bottle.

SAM

(sarcastically)

Yeah, it's in the worm!

Suddenly, Gina's anger turns to pure terror---a bullet whistles past. Sam and Gina duck.

SAM

You're like a bad dream!

Sam spots Bones and grabs Gina's arm with her shoulderbag attached. They take off running!

EXT. DANCING AREA - NIGHT

PSSSTT! KEERRAK!!! WHEEEEE!!! FIREWORKS

blasting overhead, Gina and Sam race in and out of the dancers trying to lose themselves in the multitude - Bones right behind them.

Dancers are screaming and falling everywhere! Bones tramples over some fainting WOMEN and suddenly Gina is swept away by a small group. Gone.

MORE BEAUTIFUL AFRICAN WOMEN

surround Sam, rubbing their bodies against him in tribal ecstasy. Sam dances circles around them while Bones reaches out, grabbing Sam's collar, as---

A LARGE AFRICAN WOMAN picks Bones up, his feet treading air as Sam escapes.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

With only moonlight to guide her, Gina cautiously makes her way through the underbrush of a twisting jungle.

IN THE SHADOWS

Bones is joined by three other GUNMEN. They split up. Crack! Gina hears a noise, someone stepping on a twig.

BONES

steps out from behind a palm tree, lurching towards her---

GINA

S-h-i-i-t-t!!!

Nervously, Gina goes for the gun strapped in a holster between her legs, and---

WHAMMM!!!!

Bones is clobbered in the face with a board he steps on. Crack! - she hears another noise.

A MAN

grabs her from behind. She reaches back, pulling him over her shoulder and sends him soaring through the air---

MAN

AAAHHH!!!!!!

He lands on his face with a thud! Gina lifts her gaze from the ground to the man, and catches a glimpse of---

SAM

lying helplessly in the brush. Embarrassed, she tries to help him up---

SAM

No! I don't need your help!

RA-TA-TA-TA-TA!!!! Bones has recovered and he's hopping mad! Sam and Gina head for the river bank.

EXT. RIVER BANK - NIGHT

Quickly, Sam unties a motorboat and jumps---fifteen feet down into the craft below.

Gina hesitates, looks back---a gunman racing towards her. In front, another gunman reloads his gun, then aims for the boat. Sam hits the throttle!

Gina takes a deep breath, jumping for the motorboat, both gunmen racing towards her, and---

KA BOOM!!

A bazooka BLAST hits the shoreline killing the two gunmen as Gina jumps, and---

SPLASH!

Gina hits the water just as Sam moves the motorboat out of the line of fire.

Bones reloads the bazooka!

SAM

reverses the boat to try and pick up Gina struggling in the water to grab hold of her bobbing shoulderbag.

GINA

What is it with you?!

Sam offers her his arm. Angry, Gina takes it as she grabs the floating bag.

SAM

I just like livin'.

Their eyes meet - she looks deep into his soul, trying to figure out what he's made of. BAM! Another blast explodes beside them, rocking the boat. Gina nearly falls off. Sam catches her, pulling her up over the side, their eyes meet again. PING!

SPLAT!

Sam drops Gina like a hot potato into the boat, revving up the engine. The motorboat speeds off.

GINA

You sure must have pissed a hell of a lot of people off!

SAM

It's not me they want. It's you!

GINA

Me?! Listen, if you hadn't....

The motorboat engine drowns out their voices as the two of them continue to argue.

MINUTES LATER---

Rapids appear just ahead. Sam maneuvers the boat over to a tree branch and ties it up.

SAM

We'll have to go by foot.

GINA

(petrified)

Jesus, I'm not dressed for this!

He tosses her a pair of knee-high man's boots.

SAM

You are now!

EXT. BOAT - NIGHT

Sam climbs out of the motorboat while Gina struggles with the boots.

SAM

Are you coming or do I have to carry you?

Fuming, Gina climbs out of the boat---her feet touching onto some kind of black squishy stuff.

GINA

Don't underestimate me because I'm a woman.

Suddenly, Gina catches a glimpse of what is under her feet. It's ANTS, millions of black army ants. She SCREAMS bloody murder, legs kicking in the air as if she were doing an Indian rain dance. Sam rushes to Gina's side and slaps her hard on her back, pushing her forward---

SAM

Just keep moving!

Sam prances across the blanket of ants like a ballet dancer, passing Gina who cringes with every step.

GINA

(yelling)

So how did Dr. Lucas get his half of the urn?

OVER HIS SHOULDER---

Sam spots the half urn sticking out of Gina's bag. He scowls, pissed that she's involving him again.

SAM

I found it and sent it to him.
Thought I'd be doing a good deed
for humanity.

Whoosh! He lets go of a tree branch. She ducks--almost slipping off a rock.

GINA

Where's the other half?

Gina loses her balance. Sam catches her.

SAM

I don't know. Maybe you better ask
your trigger-happy friends.

GINA

(out of breath)
Ismail said you knew where it was.

Away from the ants, Sam stops dead in his tracks, fighting to control his emotions.

SAM

I did! That's why Lucas is dead!
And it looks like we're next!

They approach a desolate looking cave carved out of the hillside along the river.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Various artifacts, shovels, etc. are on the floor beside a cot; a tequila bottle sits on a table. Sam lights a kerosene lamp and checks his bruised face in the mirror---

SAM

You're getting too old for this.

Looking at Gina's tired reflection in the mirror, Sam tosses her some clean clothes.

GINA

So what is it about the mountain
that frightens you so much?

He downs a tequila shot, lights a cigarette.

SAM
 (through his teeth)
 God really does hate me.

GINA
 What?

SAM
 My father always use to say there
 are some things that you just don't
 mess with.

As Sam remembers, rage and anxiety begins to swell - like a volcano ready to erupt, then---bam!

SAM
 That mountain is one of 'em.

The tequila glass splatters against the wall!

GINA
 I don't scare easily!

CUT TO:

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

Drinking with the AFRICAN MINISTER OF FINANCE (one of the men from the meeting at Bio-Com), Buchara raises his glass in a toast.

BUCHARA
 To your generous hospitality.

Clink! their glasses meet just as Yaska bursts in, looking like he's been run over by a truck.

AFRICAN MINISTER
 My pleasure.

YASKA
 (out of breath)
 Those camel lice got away!

BUCHARA
 (disgusted)
 Never mind, you imbecile!
 (smiling)
 It's time to use my insurance.

BUCHARA

places the HANGED MAN TAROT CARD down on the table and glances over at Lady (with two pink bows in her hair), tied up in the corner, wearing a helpless expression.

Buchara, Yaska, and the Minister laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

A RABBIT

on a skewer is staring Gina in the face.

SAM

Better eat something.

She nearly chokes on Sam's cigarette smoke.

GINA

I don't eat helpless animals, thank you.

Sam tears into the animal with his teeth. Gina makes a face. He goes to some shelves and slams a can of kidney beans down on the table.

GINA

Aren't we the gracious host.

SAM

Look, I told you about Lucas, about the Urn...everything, alright! Aren't you satisfied?

Gina Sorts through a pile of award plaques on the floor from Princeton School of Archaeology, Chicago Oriental Institute, etc., while trying to console him---

GINA

You can't blame yourself for Lucas's death.

She's hit a major nerve. Sam drops his eyes, her words stinging as he swigs down two more shots of tequila.

Gina fingers Sam's initials S.H.G., monogrammed on the shirt she's wearing, picks up a photo of his three brothers, together with his dad (a minister), and mother.

GINA

How did you find the mountain without the other half of the urn?

Sam grabs the half urn out of Gina's bag and points to part of the inscription.

SAM
 There! In ancient Aramic,
 Quarzazat means mountain.

He points to a map on the table.

SAM
 Which happens to be here in
 Morocco.

Gina looks at the map. Quarzazat is in southern Morocco.

GINA
 So why did Lucas need the other
 half of the urn?

SAM
 When we got to the top, the road
 divided into three ways. We went
 down the middle.

Gina takes a good look at the urn. She can see how the road
 divides into three. They trail off where the urn is broken.

GINA
 And then?

SAM
 Obviously, it was the wrong choice.
 All of my men were killed.

GINA
 So you blame yourself for that too?

Their eyes meet in the dim light. Gina's cheeks are flush.
 She notices a small plaque on the wall behind him, and walks
 over to it: - "Be like a pebble effortlessly gliding along
 the stream of life."

GINA
 Ever get the feeling that your life
 is being guided by some mysterious
 force?

SAM
 Yeah, my father.

Sam glances over at his father's stern Minister's face.

GINA
 Seriously, I mean, these past two
 days have been one coincidence
 after another,I've been thrown
 into this whole mess...

SAM

If you're trying to make me think...

Exhausted, Sam's body is starting to ache. Gina sits beside him---

GINA

Maybe this is your chance to redeem yourself...Sam.

Gina leans her head on his shoulder and closes her eyes.

GINA

You could help save Melik's life and possibly thousands of others.

Plunk! Sam's head falls forward. He's snoring! Gina leans over, tempted to seduce him. Suddenly, he wakes up. An awkward, almost romantic moment follows. Then, Sam snaps out of it---

SAM

(angry)

I told you.....

Sam jumps up abruptly. Gina jumps up abruptly, feeling rebuffed.

SAM

I'm not going back!!

Sam leaves, taking the tequila bottle with him. Furious, Gina throws an empty tequila bottle at the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVER - NEXT MORNING

Like a giant grapefruit, the sun rises between jungle mountain peaks shooting towards the heavens.

Sam lays sprawled out in the motor boat, smoking and drinking, a walkman plugged into his ears. He wears sun glasses to hide the dark circles under his eyes from lack of sleep.

FROM BEHIND

Gina approaches and notices he's been doodling the same picture of the SUN and the MOON. It makes her feel connected to him, she wants to say something, but---

AWK!!! AWK!!! AWK!! a bird issues a nerve racking screech!!

EXT. CITY DOCK - QUAGADOUGOU - DAY

The motorboat pulls up. Sam can't look at Gina as she climbs out of the boat---mad!

SAM

Despite what you think, I want to help Melik. But, I have my reasons for not wanting to go back.

Not looking back, Gina steps onto the dock.

SAM

You're welcome!

Sam's frustration is pasted all over his face.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Gina flings open the door, a gasp rising in her throat when she sees her clothes, and personal belongings strewn everywhere.

A nervous feeling knots in her stomach as she picks up the morning paper pinned to her pillow. Headlines read: "DEADLY FEVER OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN KILLS THOUSANDS IN INDIA."

Beside the paper is THE TAROT CARD REPRESENTING DEATH. ON BACK OF THE TAROT CARD IS WRITTEN---

"Mechanism in place to release deadly fever on the U.S. within 24 hrs., unless I receive your half of the urn. Expecting you tonight at 7:00 p.m. as the guest of the AFRICAN MINISTER OF FINANCE. J.T. Buchara. P.S. I've got my ace in the hole." A POLAROID PICTURE of Kelly's face is pasted on the HANG MAN TAROT CARD.

Worried, Gina plops her wet shoulderbag on the bed and tries to wring out some clothes. The Maalox bottle is empty.

CUT TO:

INT. GINA'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Wearing a ravishing, low-cut tight red dress, which has now shrunk, Gina tugs at the sides, making sure the Derringer pistol is securely hidden, then checks for the half urn in her purse.

EXT. AFRICAN MINISTER'S MANSION - QUAGADOUGOU - NIGHT

A virtual palace. Circular driveway is full of limousines. VALET opens the door to Gina's jeep.

INT. AFRICAN MINISTER'S MANSION - QUAGADOUGOU - 7:00 P.M.

An overly ornate decor, complete with glass dome ceilings, a marbled foyer, expensive art, and a running fountain.

RESEMBLING A FOOTBALL HUDDLE---

a GROUP of OLDER MEN surround Gina. She constantly tugs at the sides of her shrunken dress while searching the room for any sign of her blackmailer.

PROFESSOR #1

Ah, yes. Carl Jung's principle of Synchronicity. A term which implies that chance encounters have a deeper, spiritual meaning.

PROFESSOR #2

I believe it has something to do with the theory that all events in the universe are organized by some cosmic energy force.

They all laugh. Gina shakes her head wondering if these guys read the same books Dr. Lucas did. She issues a polite, paste-on smile, then leaves.

GINA

Excuse me.

AT THE DOOR

the African Minister is greeting a number of guests when Sam staggers in, drunk, and hardly recognizable. He's clean shaven, wearing navy creased pants with suspenders and a jacket over a white monogrammed shirt with matching white suede shoes.

INT. MANSION BASEMENT - NIGHT

OLD BLOOD STAINS---

not quite washed away on a black and white checked floor. In sharp contrast to the ornate decor of the mansion, the basement is state of the art high tech torture chamber comprised of hydraulic buttons on a main security panel, over which several TV security monitors hang.

KELLY

squirms nervously in his chains, hanging upside down (like the Hangman Tarot card) 100 feet over a deadly device of heavy rotary blades, like those in a blender.

KELLY

I do believe in God. I do..I do believe....

Lady is tied up in a chair and gagged.

INT. MANSION STUDY - NIGHT

Alone, Gina returns a book on THE KABBALAH to the bookcase.

EXT. MANSION STUDY - NIGHT

Gina exits, checking over her shoulder, when---

SAM

(slurring)

Well, well, isn't this an odd coincidence.

Eyes narrowing, Gina moves past him. Sam cops a glance of her alluring bosom.

SAM

You could at least show me a little gratitude for saving your life....

(grabbing her arm)

Again!...and get me a drink.

GINA

When you lay down with dogs, you get up with fleas.

Gina snaps her arm back, throwing Sam off balance and---

SMACK!!

Sam gets back-handed by a white-haired little old LADY as he lands in her lap.

OLD LADY

Get off me, you big baboon!!!

Massaging his jaw, Sam tries to ignore snickers from the guests as he picks himself up off the floor, still puzzled that Gina's not attracted to him.

Gina glares at him and storms off.

Yaska charges after Gina through the crowd.

A large SECURITY MAN locks the study door.

INT. MANSION BASEMENT - 7:15 P.M.

Buchara walks in, Bones on his heels, his eyes impatiently flashing at the clock and a red button on the security panel. He checks the TV monitors - no sign of Gina or Yaska.

BUCHARA
(looking at his watch)
Your friend is late.

KELLY
(worried)
She's always late. Trust me.

Kelly slaps a diplomatic smile over a pathetic expression.

BUCHARA
Time's up.

Buchara's well manicured hand wearing a Bull's head ring, bashes the red button.

WOOSH!!!

the cable unravels and sends Kelly flying on a roller coaster ride to HELL---

KELLY
AAAHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!

Paralyzed with fear, Kelly closes his eyes. Lady does the same.

Yaska bursts into the room.

YASKA
She's here!

THE CABLE

stops with a jerk as Buchara presses the button again, Kelly's head swinging just above a wicked looking blade---

KELLY'S FACE

is seized with panic as he watches this.

Gina walks in.

Lady cautiously opens one eye.

Kelly looks up towards heaven.

KELLY
Thank you, God.

Kelly and Gina exchange frightened glances.

GINA
Kelly! You alright?

KELLY
I'm hangin'.

A PAIR OF SUN GLASSES

fall off from a chain around Kelly's neck, plummeting into the whirling blade.

CRUNCH! CRUNCH!

The glasses disintegrate. Kelly takes a gulp.

BUCHARA
(to Gina)
My dear, you should never keep your guests waiting.

Yaska searches Gina, his hands lecherously running up and down her body.

GINA
Don't get yourself excited, shorty.

Gina grinds her high heel into Yaska's foot.

YASKA
(red-faced)
It's not here, boss.

She rushes to Kelly. Yaska stops her.

GINA
Let them go!

BUCHARA
The urn...

GINA
What guarantee do I have that you'll keep your word?

BUCHARA
This is not an Avon call.
(he nods to Bones)

BONES

hits the hydraulic button again. Kelly drops dangerously closer to the sinister blades.

KELLY
HEY!

GINA
Wait!

Her eyes lock with Buchara's - he means business.

GINA
I hid it.

Buchara raises his hand. Bones takes his finger off the hydraulic button. The cable stops with---

KELLY

dangling inches from a hideous death.

GINA
Upstairs. Behind the bookcase.

Buchara signals Bones to get it.

GINA
I don't understand. Why are you doing this?

BUCHARA
Why does anyone do anything? For money!

GINA
In the meantime, thousands of helpless people are dying.

BUCHARA
Be careful, my dear. The next life you save, could be your own.

Yaska drags her, kicking and clawing, over to a separate bay next to Kelly where she is belted into straps attached to a pulley.

GINA
You said a trade!

Buchara produces an icy smile.

BUCHARA
I lied.
(to Bones)
Kill them.

He struts out.

EXT. MANSION HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hair disheveled, Sam is humming as he staggers through the corridor. He bumps into the large SECURITY MAN.

SAM

Which way is the men's room?

The security man points to the end of the hall, scornfully shaking his head as he watches Sam weave toward his destiny. Sam checks his pocket, looking at a key ring which he lifted from the man's belt.

EXT. MANSION OFFICE - NIGHT

Checking over his shoulder, Sam nervously tries several keys to open the door. Bingo! He finds the right one.

INT. MANSION BASEMENT - NIGHT

Buchara ogles Gina dangling from the cable shaft as Yaska hoists her above the blades.

BUCHARA

Nice ass! Too bad!

EXT. MANSION OFFICE - NIGHT

A SECOND SECURITY GUARD walks by and hears a noise inside. He unlocks the door, checks the room with a flashlight. Satisfied, he leaves.

Moments later, Sam pokes his head out the door and, checking both ways, he wraps Buchara's half of the urn in a handkerchief, stuffs it in his pocket, shuts the door, and staggers down the hallway, humming.

INT. MANSION BASEMENT - NIGHT

Lady wiggles out of bondage. ARFFF! ARFFF!

BUCHARA

Kill that animal!

BULLETS

whiz past Lady's head from Yaska's gun. He misses. She makes a bee line through the basement ventilation system.

BUCHARA

You idiot! We'll have to get it from the other side.

Numb with fear, Gina glances down the cold steel shaft---

GINA
 (to Kelly)
 I told Alan this was a bad idea.

Buchara storms out. Yaska punches the hydraulic button, and follows.

WHHOOSH!!!!!!

Gina is plummeted towards the deadly blades. Kelly drops another inch closer to his death. Gina is staring at the fast twirling blades below, when---

THE CABLE

stops with a jerk!

Gina fastens her fearful gaze on the the blades as they disintegrate the heels on her shoes!

SAM

releases his finger from the hydraulic button. The cable stops.

GINA
 What are you doing here?

SAM
 They ran out of tequila....

Sam climbs up to unhook Gina from her chains, she glares down at him.

SAM
 But my feelings about the mountain haven't changed.

WHOO! WHOO!! WHOO!!

The whirling blades keep Kelly squirming.

KELLY
 Hey!!! Cut the shit! Get me out of here!!

A LASER BEAM

burns a hole in Sam's arm as he reaches to unhook Gina.

GINA
 Look out!

AN ELECTRONIC EYE

searches the room. Another laser catches Sam's leg.

SAM

Damn! Why didn't I listen to my
father?

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Yaska is searching the grounds for Lady.

YASKA

Here nice doggie. Nice doggie.
Come to daddy.

Flashing a mouthful of teeth, Lady jumps out from the bushes, surprising Yaska. Yaska stumbles, his gun flying into the bushes. Lady jumps on Yaska's back and licks his ears, paralyzing him with fear.

INT. MANSION STUDY - NIGHT

Bones knocks the door down to get in.

INT. MANSION FOYER - NIGHT

Buchara is detained by some official heads of State.

INT. MANSION BASEMENT - NIGHT

Lady crawls back into the lab through the ventilator shaft.

GINA

Lady!! Lady!!! Play ball, girl.
Come on....

THREE GOLF BALLS

are laying on the counter. Lady climbs up, puts her nose to a golf ball and its airborne. It bounces off Kelly's head. ARRRF ARRRF ARRRF!! Lady howls with delight!!!

KELLY

I'll get you for that!

THE FLYING GOLF BALL

disintegrates. Disappointed, Lady throws another. Sam ducks under the laser as it disintegrates the second golf ball, then unhooks Gina, her eyes fastening on Sam as she falls from his grasp.

Gina grabs a suspender, it breaks and she slides down Sam's pant's leg, a desperate look on Gina's face, as Sam reaches out to catch her just in time.

CRACK!

the cable holding Kelly suddenly starts to fray.

KELLY

drops another inch closer to the spinning blades---eyes closed, chanting and praying in one breath.

The cable splits apart.

EYES GOING WIDE---

Kelly drops, landing on a steel platform as Lady (who has been standing on the security panel button which closed the hatch on the blades) walks over to Kelly, and licks his face.

KELLY

I'll never call you stupid again.

Sam pulls the plugs on the TV monitors, grabs an uzi from a rack.

Gina removes a half-silvered compact from her purse. One side of the compact looks like a mirror, but is transparent on the other side. She positions it on the outside edge of a counter, then places a regular compact mirror at the opposite edge of the counter, and---

TOSSING

her earring out, the laser shoots past, but the light is split in two by the half-silvered mirror, bouncing off the other mirror, and the beam is locked. The large steel exit door opens. Sam is impressed, but won't admit it.

SAM

What makes you so sure they won't be waiting for us?

GINA

Intuition.

INT. MANSION STUDY - NIGHT

Bones is ripping apart the bookshelf. He doesn't find the urn, and leaves.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

A commotion in the house lures THREE AFRICAN SOLDIERS on patrol inside, leaving a sleek high tech BLACK JEEP with monster mag tires, unguarded.

The gang runs past the jeep. Gina stops, a thought racing through her mind. Sam stops with the same thought---

GINA
I'll drive!

SAM
I'll drive!!

They all pile in, except Gina. ARFFF!!! ARFFF!! Kelly clamps his hand over Lady's mouth.

GINA
Wait!

INT. MANSION OFFICE - NIGHT

Buchara, Bones and the Security man that Sam ripped off, enter.

Buchara heads directly to an unlocked safe that the urn was sealed in. It is gone! Buchara smashes the steel door, and turns to the Security guard.

BUCHARA
Mistakes....

Buchara picks up a gun, spraying the guard with a round of bullets.

BUCHARA
Will not be tolerated!

EXT. MANSON - NIGHT

A red light flashes on the BLACK BOX Gina is holding as she approaches a bald spot on the grass. She digs up Lucas' half urn.

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - NIGHT

The dash is computerized.

SAM
No Key!

Gina punches a button. A message comes up: TO START PROGRAM, PUSH THE START BUTTON. She fires up the jeep, then smiling, she looks smugly over at Sam.

Sam is perturbed.

YASKA

This jeep belongs to Bio-Com. Get out!

Trembling in Yaska's hand is a small revolver. Gina retrieves the Derringer, pointing it at Yaska while Sam reaches over and grabs the revolver from him.

DRIVER

Help!!!!

Sam covers Yaska's mouth and the little twerp bites him.

Enraged, Sam grabs Yaska by both ears and tosses him into the back seat of the jeep.

FROM THE UPSTAIRS OFFICE WINDOW---

Buchara lets loose with a round of machine gunfire!

BUCHARA

Stop them!

The jeep speeds off!

INT. BIO-COM JEEP ON THE ROAD - NIGHT

A LARGE SEMI is heading straight for them---the jeep skids along a steep embankment.

Legs flying, Lady is tossed into Kelly's lap. Yaska slams into Lady's rear, repulsed as he gets a smelly whiff---

YASKA

Ugghhh.....

CUT TO:

EXT. MANSON - NIGHT

Buchara and Bones pile into another jeep.

CUT TO:

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - NIGHT

The jeep flies over a pile of rocks---bonk! Yaska lands in Lady's face. She plants a slobbery lick on Yaska's face---

YASKA

Get that slimy piece of shit away
from me!!!

SAM

(yelling)
Where'd you learn to drive?

Gina moves out of her seat---

GINA

Here, you drive!

Sam jumps into Gina's seat, eyes going wide as the accelerator touches the floor without even putting his foot down; this jeep has a mind of its own. Terrified, Yaska closes his eyes as---

The jeep rounds a sharp corner ON TWO WHEELS.
SPEEDOMETER READS: 120 kilometers per hour.

BUCHARA'S HALF OF THE URN

slips out of Sam's pocket. Sam's eyes flash on the urn, then on Gina. They now have both halves.

SAM

I'll go as far as the border, but
I'm not goin' up the mountain!

GINA

(looking behind them)
You better figure out a way to get
rid of them first!

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

SIX JEEPS, full of Buchara's MEN, pull out of hiding and hit the road, a constant blast of MACHINE GUNFIRE trailing the fugitives.

ONE OF BUCHARA'S JEEPS

whips along side the Bio-com jeep, filling it with slugs.

SAM

Hey! Have a smoke.

Sam flicks a lit cigarette into the GUNNER'S crotch. Hysterical with pain, the gunner shoots up out of his seat.

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - NIGHT

Sam shifts into fifth gear. The speedometer goes up to 150.

GINA
 (pushing some buttons)
 It must be pre-programmed!

YASKA
 Give me the urn and I'll give you
 the code.

Gina hits several more buttons on the dash. A ROCKET shoots out of the rear of the jeep---heading straight for Buchara's jeeps behind them.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The rocket misses the FIRST THREE JEEPS---SLAMS into Jeeps 4, 5 & 6. Buchara's jeep emerges from A BLAZE OF FLAMES and charges down the road.

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - NIGHT

A barrage of bullets whiz past Yaska's head.

YASKA
 It's no use. They're going to kill
 you!

GINA
 That's nothing compared to what
 they're going to do to you when we
 tell them you helped us escape.

PANEL BUTTON LIGHT FLASHES: FUEL LOW. ENGINE SPUTTERS.

Yaska's eyes widen; he's afraid Buchara may shoot first and ask questions later. Sam points the revolver.

SAM
 You better think of something fast,
 we're running out of gas!

Another bullet whizzes past.

YASKA
 Just don't kill me!

GINA
 (cocking her gun)
 You haven't got a choice!

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Buchara and the three other jeeps are gaining!

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - NIGHT

More bullets race past Yaska's ear.

YASKA

OK...OK...hit the red refuel button
under the dash.

Sam and Gina look at each other astonished. Sam hits the button, the jeep takes off like a bullet.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The road ahead is crawling with AFRICAN SOLDIERS. FOUR JEEPS positioned crosswise in a roadblock. Buchara's men open fire!

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - NIGHT

Gina and the gang duck! The Bio-Com jeep is driving towards a head on collision with the roadblock. Kelly grimaces.

SAM

Hold onto your hats!

Eyes closed, finger poised, Gina pushes another button on the dash.

EXT. ROADBLOCK - NIGHT

Suddenly, a hydraulic power lift raises the body of the Bio-com jeep ten feet above the wheel base. The African soldiers duck for cover as the jeep BLASTS through the blockade.

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - NIGHT

Sam throws Gina an incredulous glance.

GINA

It was a lucky guess.

The dashboard flashes: HYDRAULIC LIFT COMPLETE.

EXT. ROADBLOCK - NIGHT

Buchara's first three jeeps collide with the blockade leaving a black cloud of smoke in the sky.

INT./EXT. BIO-COM JEEP - NIGHT

SAM'S POV

in the rear-view mirror. Buchara's jeep emerges from behind the flames.

SAM
Not lucky enough!

Sam pushes a button: "FIRE GUNS" flashes on the dash. GUNFIRE BLASTS out of the front of the jeep. He hits the button next to it. GUNFIRE BLASTS out from both sides of the jeep. Buchara's jeeps are gaining. Pushing a third button, GUNFIRE BLASTS out the back of the jeep as it takes off with a jerk.

UP AHEAD---

a pair of red lights are flashing. A bell is ringing.

SAM
(clenching his teeth)
A train.....

Gaining from behind, Buchara's jeep opens fire with a machine gun, two NEW jeeps following.

SAM
(to Gina)
Come on, do something!

Gina hits another button: "EMERGENCY STOP" flashes. The jeep stops on the train tracks. Gina winces.

GINA - SAM - KELLY - YASKA'S POV

As Buchara's jeep bears down on them from behind, the train approaching---

YASKA
(closing his eyes)
I should have joined the army!

WHOOSH!

Buchara shoots off the Bio-Com jeep's back doors--as his jeep skirts underneath the stilted Bio-Com jeep, missing the train by inches.

SAM

punches at buttons in the Bio-Com jeep, it lurches into "auto reverse". The OTHER TWO JEEPS following Buchara's path, pass underneath the raised Bio-Com jeep, and---

KA BOOM!

A FANTASTIC EXPLOSION IGNITES THE SKY as the two following jeeps collide with the train. The Bio-Com jeep continues in reverse, turns around, and our heroes flee into the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD IN AFRICA - MORNING - A FEW HOUR LATER

The Bio-com jeep speedily winds through wild African terrain. As the jeep crosses into MALI, the terrain changes color and flattens out into the large expanse of the--- SAHARA DESERT.

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - DAY

Gina is driving. In back, Yaska is snoring with Lady asleep in his lap. Kelly is sandwiched next to the window.

SAM

draws a line north on the map, through the Sahara Desert, to the Quad mountains in Morocco and marks an "X" - takes a swig of tequila.

Gina's eyes lock in on his, narrowing with contempt. He surreptitiously buries the hip flask in his left back pocket, then he fits the two halves of the URN together.

SAM

Well, I'll be damned!

He carefully scrutinizes the hieroglyphics on the urn.

SAM

According to the urn, it says...the cure you seek is found on the rock on the mountain where the book lies.

GINA

What book?

Sam reads the inscription slowly.

SAM

The...Book...of...the...Shrine.

Unsure of himself---

SAM

An ancient Sumerian holy book.

Sucking on a cigarette, Sam flicks the butt out the window thinking about the book.

SAM
I'm not going back!

Sam wakes Yaska up out of a deep sleep. Yaska mumbles something, opens his eyes and---

YASKA
AAHHH!!! AAHHH!!!

Yaska discovers Lady's slimy tongue glued to his face. Startled, Kelly wakes up screaming---

KELLY
AAHHH!!!

Trying to compose himself, Kelly suddenly finds he is at war with a swarm of gnats.

KELLY
Hey! Let's get outta here!

SAM
(to Yaska)
You get off here.

Gina stops the jeep, drawing her gun on Yaska.

YASKA
You wouldn't leave a man to die in the desert alone?

Yaska catches a glimpse of buzzards circling overhead.

Kelly picks up an Oasis water bottle in the back seat of the jeep.

YASKA
....Ugh....

GINA
Not if you tell us how Buchara is spreading the fever.

SAM
I'd say he'd last about four hours without food and water.....

Kelly has the water bottle nearly pressed to his lips.

YASKA
O.k., o.k., he's sending it out in bottled water.

Kelly panics, throwing the bottle down, the contaminated water burning a hole in the sand.

YASKA

More than a million bottles are on their way to India. He's planning on releasing more shipments all over the world. It's your fault those people are gonna die.

Speechless, Kelly waves his arms at the group, trying to get their attention.

YASKA

As soon as he gets the urn, he'll find the cure. Now, you've messed it up.

Kelly taps Sam on his shoulder, pointing to the deadly water which has eaten a hole in the ground. Gina's and Sam's eyes widen---

Sam yanks Yaska out of the jeep.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

YASKA

Wait a minute! You said you weren't going to dump me.

SAM

I lied.

Sam drags Yaska away from the jeep.

BOOM!!

a gun suddenly goes off. It hits Sam smack dab in his left back pocket, tequila spilling down his leg.

EYES SQUINTING

into the harsh sun, Sam turns to Gina just in time to see her face light up with an embarrassed smile. Near the jeep, Gina is holding the revolver in one hand, the uzi in the other.

GINA

I was looking for something. It slipped.

SAM

Women! Never let 'em grab your uzi or your plastic!

Peeved, Sam climbs back in the jeep. They take off.

Yaska walks over to the water bottle, trying to bury it in the sand.

YASKA

Wait!... Hey!!! Come back here!!!
Pigs!! Snakes!!! You'll pay for
this you slime balls!

The expression on Yaska's face suddenly changes as he timidly backs away from---

A HUNGRY LION

YASKA

Nice, kitty. Nice Kitty..kitty..

AARRRGGGHHH!!! the lion issues a ferocious sound and struts towards Yaska, running for his life!

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY OF GOUNDAM - MALI - DAY

Dust hangs over a flea market where Mali citizens are bargaining boisterously in the streets. Horn honking, the Bio-com jeep inches through the shoulder-to-shoulder mob.

EXT. GOUNDAM AIRPORT - MALI - DAY

With spectators staring, the jeep pulls to a screeching halt. Gina grabs the last Oasis water bottle.

INT. GOUNDAM AIRPORT - MALI - DAY

Amid more chaos and confusion, Gina elbows her way back from the ticket booth and hands Kelly a ticket for San Francisco.

KELLY

You're not coming?

She slips him a note with Rolf's name written on it, and hands him the Oasis bottle.

GINA

Get this to the lab in India.

Holding a newspaper in her hand, the front page reads:
"MYSTERIOUS FEVER SPREADS. THOUSANDS DYING."

GINA

I've got to get to that cure before
Buchara does.

Lady is licking Gina's toes through her sandals.

KELLY

Your shrink thinks she's starved
for love and affection.

Gina makes a face, her toes feeling slimy, then kisses
Lady's forehead affectionately. Lady howls miserably!
Kelly drags the dog out through the gate.

KELLY

I've still got your beeper number.

GINA

Make sure you get that to the lab
pronto! And tell Alan I want a
bigger office when I get back.

CUT TO:

EXT. GOUNDAM AIRPORT - DAY

Gina rushes out. No sign of Sam. She doesn't notice him
leading up against the building behind her, smoking.
Suddenly, she stops and turns---

GINA

Are you coming?

SAM

If I do, I want the book.

In disbelief, she steps closer.

GINA

The book! All you care about is
the book?! What about Melik?

SAM

Lucas told me that the book may
hold the answer to everything man
ever wanted to know about our
existence.

GINA

You mean, that there is no such
thing as God? Is that what you're
looking for? So you can prove your
father a fake? Guess I thought
you had little more substance than
that!

SAM

I don't see you wearing a good Samaritan badge.

Moving towards him, Gina starts pointing her finger in his face.

GINA

Dr. Gallagher, I'll have you know I have served on two charities, raised money for the homeless and adopted an elephant named Zia in Zimbabwe, all in the name of concern for my fellow man, which you don't seem to have any of!

Sam grabs her finger and kisses her passionately.

GINA

(pulling away)

Just like a man! If you can't get what you want, try sex!

SAM

What would you know about it?

GINA

Ugh!!!!

Eyes flashing, Gina feels a lump in her throat as she stomps off.

GINA

I wonder if you care about anyone, including yourself!

Gina leaves. Sam crushes a butt under his foot. She's hit a nerve---again!

CUT TO:

EXT. SAHARA DESERT - DAY

Encircled by the vast expanse of the desert, the jeep rides swiftly towards a giant fireball in the sky.

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - DAY

SAM

Looks like we'll have to camp here for the night.

The heat is getting to her. They have no water.

GINA
If we go a little further ahead,
there's bound to be something.

SAM
How do you figure that?

GINA
Intuition.

Sam can tell by the gleam in her eye that she's playing another hunch.

EXT. ROAD - SAHARA DESERT - DAY

Emerging between red clay mounds, the scalloped white walls of a SPECTACULAR palace/oasis appear out of nowhere.

INT. BIO-COM JEEP - DAY

Snatching the map out of Gina's lap---

SAM
Intuition, my ass!

To his chagrin, the map indicates the nearest city to be more than five hundred miles away.

EXT. THE LOST CITY - DAY

The jeep pulls up in front of---

MAMMOTH ELEPHANTS

and tigers jutting out of a marble facade. An enormous golden door slowly opens. Behind it, a menacing group of uniformed ARMED MEN with dark skin, black wiry hair, and blue painted faces.

SAM
Thanks to your intuition....

Suddenly! - a chipper MAN in his mid 60's, tanned, spry, with quick, friendly eyes, wearing a maroon hat and a gold embroidered uniform appears. This is PETRIE McALISTER. As Sam and Gina approach, he bows.

PETRIE
Welcome! Welcome to the Lost City.
Petrie McAlister, at your service.

Like the old pro that he is, Petrie swoops in and gently relieves them of their bags.

The golden doors slam shut with a clunk behind them - then miraculously disappear.

PETRIE

How long will you be staying in our country?

SAM

(uneasy)

Long enough to find what we're looking for.

PETRIE

If you are a truth seeker, that shouldn't be long.

Sam eyes Petrie suspiciously as they are ushered inside, spears pointing at their backs.

SAM

(whispering to Gina)

Hope they've had dinner.

INT. LOST CITY - DAY

Ill at ease, Sam and Gina are directed down a long corridor festooned with beautiful marble goddesses.

GINA

Why do they call it the Lost City?

PETRIE

It once belonged to a great Queen, but a terrible catastrophe happened. And it was lost....

Petrie points to a huge portrait of---

A HIGH PRIESTESS

of silky chocolate skin and almond shaped eyes. She wears an elaborate headress adorned with gold leaves, silver rings and stars with lapis over heavy thick jet black hair.

She is flanked by two handsomely muscular men, naked from the waist up, with one offering her a plate of fruit as the other massages her feet with oil.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE LOST CITY - DAY

Exhausted by the heat, a camel strolls up to the city gate and drinks from the pond, on its hump is a scroungy OLD DESERT RAT MAN who collects junk. Then, we see---

A PAIR OF BLACK PLATFORM SHOES

on Yaska who is sleeping on the desert rat's back. By now, he looks like a fried hairy caterpillar.

UHFFFFFFF!!!! the camel snorts - so does Yaska. He awakes with a disgusted look while sniffing a foul scent in the air.

YASKA

Thanks for the shoes, shorty.

Yaska pays the man for the shoes, slips off and lands in camel dung.

YASKA

Oh, shit!

The desert rat laughs, happy to see his miserable passenger finally get what he deserves.

CUT TO:

INT. LOST CITY - HALLWAY - DAY

Guards in tow, Petrie leads Gina and Sam through an elaborate hallway and up to a long red carpet in front of an empty throne. To the left is a hotel type check-in desk. Behind it, a sign reads: "BE LIKE A PEBBLE EFFORTLESSLY CARRIED THROUGH THE STREAM OF LIFE."

Gina frowns.

GINA

What is this place?

PETRIE

When ancient Sumeria was destroyed in 2500 B.C., the holy temple was re-built here.

(whispering)

I'm what you call the oasiskeeper.

(beat)

Will that be one room or two?

SAM

One!

GINA
 (simultaneously)
 Two!

SAM
 Didn't these Sumerians also hide
 some kind of ancient Holy Book?

PETRIE
 That's why you're here, isn't it?

Petrie's remark takes Sam and Gina by surprise. Yaska is listening in the shadows.

PETRIE
 (to Gina)
 Uhm...while you are in the Lost
 City, you must wear this.

Gina's eyes flicker wider as Petrie hands her a gown like Salome wore in the "Dance of the Seven Veils." Petrie issues a mischevious smile on cue.

PETRIE
 It's nothing to lose your head
 over.

With spears pointing in Gina's face, Sam enjoys watching her squirm.

PETRIE
 We have something for you, too.

Petrie hands Sam an Arab robe and it's Gina's turn to enjoy watching him squirm. Petrie then leads them out into the garden. Yaska disappears.

EXT. THE LOST CITY - GARDEN - DAY

They are led through a fantastic garden growing at the foot of a mountain. Here tigers and elephant roam freely. A treacherous waterfall empties down into a lake.

SAM
 Hope that's not the only way out.

Petrie merely smiles at that remark, making Sam and Gina uncomfortable as he leads them to a staircase where a MIDGET escorts them to the rooms upstairs.

PETRIE
 Dinner is at nine. Oh, and, uh,
 remember, while you are in the Lost
 City, seek to alter what you accept
 as true.

Petrie winks as he disappears around a corner. Gina and Sam don't know what to make of him.

EXT. THE LOST CITY - DAY

At the Bio-com jeep, Yaska is using the telephone.

YASKA

Yeah, boss! They're here! In the
Lost City!

CUT TO:

INT. BIO-COM - QUAGAGDOUOU - DAY

All we see is the back of Buchara's big black chair, his feet on the credenza in front of him, talking on the SPEAKER PHONE. Another MAN is pacing in the shadows.

BUCHARA

Get that urn! And eliminate them!

The man in the shadows walks up to the desk: it's Rolf, his face anxious with worry.

ROLF

You promised you wouldn't hurt her!

A lascivious smile crosses Buchara's lips.

ROLF

Let me talk to her. I'll get the
urn.

BUCHARA

You haven't got much time!

Buchara looks out the window where workers are fueling up the chopper. In a hurry, Rolf grabs a wad of money off the table.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE LOST CITY - DAY

YASKA

(to Buchara)

They'll pay for what they did to
me! They'll die like worms!

Petrie walks up.

PETRIE

Can I help you?

Caught red-handed on the phone, Yaska issues a sad smile.

YASKA

(lying)

It's my mother...she's ill.

(beat)

Worms.

Petrie eyes him suspiciously.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM & GINA'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Feeling cranky and uncomfortable, Gina fidgets with her dress in the mirror while Sam, looking particularly handsome in his white Arab robe, takes a hit off a Raki bottle he found downstairs. Her reflection takes his breath away.

THEIR EYES

meet and, for a fleeting moment, that heady feeling Gina had when they first met in Africa, returns.

SAM

Look, sorry about today. Guess you think I'm a real....

Clunk! Clunk! Clunk! - someone's banging on the door.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Yaska's ugly platform shoes noticeably protrude from the bottom of a hooded white robe. Suddenly, he veers to avoid---

SAM AND GINA

heading towards the grand ballroom, the midget walking in front of them. Gina feels half naked as mysterious Arab men ogle her down the hallway.

GINA

I wonder what Petrie meant by altering our perception of the truth?

SAM

(nervous)

I wouldn't turn my back on him. He gives me the willies.

GINA

Why? What is it you're afraid of?

SAM

Just when I'm beginning to like you, you sound like my father.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM & GINA'S ROOM - NIGHT

While Yaska searches for the half urn, A LARGE CLEANING WOMAN opens the door to turn the sheets down. Yaska smiles, fumbling with an orange he picks up off the night stand. The cleaning woman smiles, then winks. Nervously, Yaska winks back.

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND BALLROOM - NIGHT

Gina and Sam are taken by surprise: In front of them, Petrie is suspended in mid-air, surrounded by a blanket of fog.

PETRIE

Do not be afraid. It is your illusion, not mine. Join me.

SAM

(whispering to Gina)
Told you I didn't trust him.

Hardly believing their eyes, Gina and Sam cautiously step into the illusion. Surrounding them are fire-eaters, snake-charmers, sword swallows and dancing girls mingling around a twenty foot table laden with food and drink.

GINA

I suppose this is done with lasers or something, like the holograms in the hallways.

Petrie offers them some appetizers.

PETRIE

(to Gina)
Don't worry, my first experience with the truth was especially traumatic, also.

(to Sam)
Hungry, Sam?

SAM
 Could eat a horse.

Out from nowhere, a MEDUSSA-LOOKING WOMAN appears with a covered plater which she sets in front of Sam, then winks, her eyes slightly glowing green.

Worried, Sam smiles sheepishly at the woman.

GINA
 What do you mean by truth?

PETRIE
 (to Sam)
 Go ahead, open it.
 (to Gina)
 It is only when we dare to float upon the stream of awareness that we begin to really know truth, at all.

Petrie lifts the platter cover revealing---

A BLOODY SEVERED RABBIT'S HEAD

sticking straight up off the platter, it's stiff ear's pointing towards the sky. Sam's face knots up. Gina is repulsed.

PETRIE
 Oh, but you said horse, didn't you, though you must have been thinking about "rabbit tartar." Pretty gruesomely, too I might add.

GINA
 What you're trying to say is....

SAM
 Just what kind of games are you playing, anyway, Petrie?

Sam tries to get up out of his seat when a beautiful, sexy WOMAN approaches from behind, gently massaging his neck and shoulders. Seductively, she gives him wine.

Sam starts to feel uncomfortable, yet doesn't move. TWO MORE EXOTIC BEAUTIES join in, massaging Sam's feet with oil.

PETRIE
 Enjoy, Sam. It may be your last chance.
 (to Gina who's glaring at Sam)
 Yes, my dear, continue.

GINA

(to Petrie)

Whatever the truth is, it is in our own mind.

PETRIE

Exactly.

(toasting)

In essence, it is not the truth which is important...it is how you take the truth that will determine whether you truly find wisdom.

One WOMAN offers herself to Sam, sitting in his lap. Gina bristles, but hides it.

SAM

You're one hell of an illusion.

Sam kisses the woman, then smugly glances over at Gina. Gina is getting annoyed. Another platter is set on the table by a handsome, MUSCULAR MAN.

GINA

I'm not that hungry, either.

A hint of desire registers on Gina's face as she surveys the muscular man's body.

Another, more elegant man, (a la "PRINCE CHARMING") approaches Gina. Prince Charming touches Gina's shoulder. She nearly jumps out of her skin.

PETRIE

It is only fear which diminishes your appetite.

Gina blushes, embarrassed that Petrie could read her thoughts. Prince Charming kisses her hand. Gina smiles smugly over at Sam, and the platter is opened, revealing a lemon meringue pie.

GINA

My favorite.

Prince Charming grabs Gina in a passionate stance and kisses her wildly. Stunned, Gina pushes the man away. Prince Charming leaves.

PETRIE

Be careful for what you ask for.

Breathless, Gina opens her mouth to say something, but stops. Smiling, she continues...

GINA

I noticed that sign above the register....

A knowing smile appears on Petrie's lips.

PETRIE

Life is a series of spontaneous changes. Don't resist them.

Sam whispers a joke in one woman's ear. They burst out laughing, spilling a drink.

SAM

Be back in a minute.

Jealousy registers on Gina's face as she watches Sam disappear into a back room with the woman.

INT. SAM & GINA'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The cleaning woman exits the bathroom, winks at Yaska again. Yaska smiles. Then---suddenly---she moves closer to him, lust in her eyes, - she thinks Yaska has been flirting.

PLOP!

the woman smothers Yaska with her ample body, licking his face like a dog in heat; a hairy wart on her chin staring back at him. Screaming, he runs---wobbling on his platforms.

YASKA

Help!!! Rape!!! Somebody help me!

The cleaning woman shrugs her shoulders.

INT. GRAND BALLROOM - NIGHT

Gina is constantly looking around for Sam.

GINA

What about the urn? Will it really lead us to some kind of cure for disease on the planet?

PETRIE

That depends entirely on you and Sam.

Suddenly, Sam appears behind Petrie.

SAM
Thanks for the course in Zen
Buddhism, but I think we really
should be going.

Behind Sam, Yaska is revealed packing a machine gun.

YASKA
Yeah, straight to hell!

PETRIE
Oh, dear, I'm afraid the "Light of
Wisdom" isn't going to like this.

YASKA
Don't give me that Cosmic hit!
Hand over the urn!

Gina hesitates, then removes the urn from her shoulderbag,
tossing it into the air. Everybody scrambles, bullets
flying.

YASKA
Bitch!

Yaska and Sam dive for the urn, while, to the left of them,
a GANG OF BIZARRE LOOKING WARRIORS with bull's heads for
faces, appear.

PETRIE
(to Gina)
Remember, this is a counterfeit
station, set up by the enemy to
deceive you.

SAM
Holy shit!

A hole, radiating white light, suddenly opens up in the fog.

PETRIE
Through there!

A warrior picks up the urn, ready to put it into his mouth.
Yaska sprays the warrior with bullets. Sam, Gina and
Petrie, race for the white hole.

SAM
What'd you do that for?

GINA
I hate the sight of blood. Even
yours.

Sam looks over his shoulder, contemplating going back for
the urn just as the warrior holds it his lips.

Petrie pulls Sam along.

PETRIE

The soldier on the Mystic Path
encounters many challenges. Let it
go, Sam!

Sam understands, and follows Petrie through the light.

EXT. THE LOST CITY - DAY

Petrie leads Sam and Gina through the gardens. A storm is
brewing overhead.

Buchara's Black Hawk chopper cuts through the darkening sky.
Ra! Ta! Ta! Ta! - it fires.

PETRIE

No..no...this way!

EXT. THE LOST CITY - ENTRANCE - DAY

Frantically, Yaska tries to catch Buchara's attention,
waving the urn in the air.

Bullets ricochet off the ground, missing Yaska by an inch.
Yaska dangles the urn in Buchara's view, a haughty smile on
his lips.

INT. BLACK HAWK CHOPPER - DAY

Buchara is seething with rage---

BUCHARA

You little twerp!

EXT. THE LOST CITY - ENTRANCE - DAY

Clutching the urn to his chest, Yaska runs towards the
descending chopper.

EXT. THE LOST CITY - GARDEN - DAY

Petrie leads them to the foot of the ferociously pounding
waterfall, pointing to the top.

PETRIE

(yelling)

Quickly, run along, now.

Sam and Gina look up, contemplating Petrie's impossible suggestion to climb to the top.

SAM

Why do I get the feeling we're going to die, Petrie?

PETRIE

Hurry, now!

Petrie hands them some wet suits, goggles, spiked shoes with some rope and picks to scale the waterfall. Gina is paralyzed with fear.

PETRIE

Learn to trust in yourself. Now, go on!

Petrie quickly hands Gina a silver amulet engraved with the SUN and the MOON over a hawk's outspread wings.

PETRIE

You'll need this.

Petrie places it around her neck. With the wet suits on, Sam starts up the waterfall as Gina stops to ask Petrie.....

GINA

What about you?

PETRIE

Oh, me. Never mind. I am protected by the "Light of Wisdom".

(almost secretly)

A source of light and great energy inside us all. Run along, my dear!

THE WATERFALL

pounds relentlessly down on Sam and Gina as they scale its dangerous currents tied together with the rope.

RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TATTA!

Buchara's Black Hawk chopper sprays them with a flood of bullets. Gina loses her footing, sliding down the mountainside, her shoulderbag nearly falling off.

GINA

Ahhaahhhh!

Holding onto the pick with one hand, Gina looks down at a seventy foot drop, unable to see Petrie. It's as if he's disappeared, like magic. Sam drives his pick into a safe spot, securing himself. The rope jerks! Gina suddenly bounces off the mountain and soars through the air.

INT./EXT. BLACK HAWK CHOPPER - DAY

Buchara hits a button on the dash with Yaska seated next to him.

BUCHARA

Come to daddy!

YASKA

Hey! That's my line.

BUCHARA

Shut up! You idiot!

Against the mountain now, Gina struggles to pull herself up, trying to position her spike shoe in a safe place.

The Black Hawk dangerously zeroes in on her, bullets firing. Gina looks down, petrified.

GINA

Shit!

Stationed higher up, Sam watches as the Black Hawk goes for the kill.

Sam jerks the rope, Gina loses her grip again and swings into space. The Black Hawk misses! A game of cat and mouse ensues.

BAM!

Something hits the propellers.

From above, Sam is throwing rocks into the chopper's blades, Gina nearly getting hit as she squirms on the rope.

GINA

(looking up)

Hey!!

The Black Hawk changes course, heading up for Sam.

BUCHARA

So you want to play packman!

Gina slams into the mountainside. Her pick is gone. She must use her bare hands to climb up.

GINA

(scared, clutching the necklace)

Oh, God!

Torrential water pounding in her face, Gina struggles to scale the waterfall, her feet slipping off.

LIGHTNING

flashes and Gina finds her footing again.

THE CHOPPER

roars up to the top of the waterfall. No sign of Sam. Then, Sam's face appears out from behind a boulder. The chopper moves in, circling the boulder. Crawling, on hands and knees, Sam dodges a spray of bullets.

Reaching the top, Gina climbs up on her elbows and spots what is going on. She removes something from her shoulderbag. Suddenly, the chopper swoops down on Gina!

PSST! CRACK!

a flare (launched like a spear gun) jettisons for the chopper as it pulls alongside Gina and lands in the window. Smoke is everywhere. The chopper tilts, throwing Yaska and the urn to the floor, the urn sliding towards the door---

YASKA

The urn!!

BUCHARA

You fool!

BUCHARA and YASKA

simultaneously make a dive for the urn, fighting to get it as the unmanned chopper spins out of control.

WHOOSH!

the Black Hawk looks as though it's going to plow right into the side of the waterfall.

YASKA

We're gonna die!!!

Yaska catches the urn in mid-air, falling out the chopper door, and lands on one of the chopper's landing rails.

Buchara crawls back to the controls, pulling the Black Hawk from destruction at the last possible second. The troubled chopper shoots upward, spinning crazily.

SAM'S POV

on Gina. Unable to hold on any longer, she slips over the cliff, out of sight.

SAM

Gina!!!!

Yaska squirms to hold onto the urn and the spinning chopper's rail. Yaska drops the urn!

Sam rushes to the mountain's edge, looking for Gina. Below, Gina is holding on by her fingernails!

PLOP! the urn drops into Gina's bag.

SAM

Need a hand?

Glad to see him, Gina takes his hand.

THE BLACK HAWK

spins out control. CRACK! Lightning strikes it. The chopper crashes into some nearby trees.

EXT. TOP OF THE WATERFALL - MINUTES LATER

Sam and Gina race toward a clump of trees and to an opening ahead. Standing before them is a hot air balloon.

EXT./INT. HOT AIR BALLOON - DAY

Lightning blazes across the sky. It starts to rain. Sam and Gina climb into the balloon and cut the holding rope. As the balloon ascends, Gina looks down, takes a gulp.

GINA

I need a new job!

Sam drapes his jacket around Gina's shaking shoulders, holding her near.

GINA

What you did was pretty risky.

Gina sinks deeper into Sam's arms, the warmth of their nearness igniting into mutual desire and he kisses her, when---

A GUN SHOT RINGS OUT

Gina's gun, still strapped to her leg, has accidentally gone off----shooting through the floorboard of the balloon, and nicking the tip of Sam's toe. Sam screams!

GINA

Oh, my God. You alright?

SAM

What is it with you?

THE BALLOON

shakes fiercely, quickly losing altitude in the storm. Sam quickly rips his jacket off Gina's shoulders, trying to stuff up the bullet hole.

GINA

Let me see your foot.

SAM

No! No! Don't come near me! I can take care of it myself, thank you!

Sam winces as he tries to remove his shoe. His toe is barely nicked.

GINA

(mad)

You! You arrogant, egotistical, self-absorbed, insensitive, chauvinistic Neanderthal....

SAM

(cutting in)

Sure you didn't leave anything out?

Gina shakes her head negative.

SAM

Good. Don't move because there's a tarantula behind you.

Gina freezes, panic stricken. Sam picks up a stick off the balloon floor and carefully inches towards her, closer and closer, until he is nearly in her face, pointing the stick to the top of one of the balloon ropes. Gina turns around. No spider.

THE BALLOON

hits a bump, jolting Sam into Gina's arms. Rain pounding on their faces, Sam looks into Gina's eyes wanting to say he wishes things were different between them.

Still pretending to go after his "imaginary" insect, he reaches up behind her, kissing her, tenderly, passionate, with Gina slowly settling into his arms---goggles and wet suits flying out of the balloon.

EXT. THE LOST CITY - ENTRANCE - DAY

A jeep comes to a screeching halt in the heavy rain. Rolf steps out just in time to watch the balloon fly away. He notices that the balloon is quickly losing elevation.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOT AIR BALLOON - NEXT DAY

Carried by the fierce howling wind, the balloon travels over the Sahara Desert away from the storm, towards the dry red soil of the Draa Valley and blue sky. Not far behind, Rolf is tracking them in his jeep.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOT AIR BALLOON - DUSK

Materializing out of a thin purple haze, the OMINOUS BLUE MOUNTAIN of Quarazazat looms 20,000 ft. above a beautiful fairytale village, its lights twinkling in the dusk.

INT. HOT AIR BALLOON - DUSK

In awe of the mountain and its secret, Sam and Gina are frozen with anticipation as the MOON moves into the sky beside the setting sun.

On the map, Sam points his finger to the spot where he marked an "X".

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SAM
 There it is. The mountain of
 Quarazazat.

EXT. HOT AIR BALLOON - DUSK

An anxious crowd gathers below.

EXT. QUARAZAZAT - DUSK

With Gina at the helm, the balloon lands with a thud!

Suddenly, Sam and Gina are surged upon by angry villagers in Berber robes, warriors in feathered headdresses, women wearing patchwork kaftans with dangling brass finery, and wild looking mountain men---weapons drawn.

INT. BALLOON - DUSK

SAM
 Looks like this crowd could tear us
 apart with their bare hands.

A tense moment follows as the crowd moves in on them. Gina searches around the balloon and picks up something off the floor near a pigeon, then climbs out of the balloon.

PSSSST!!!! POP!!!

A flare goes off. The crowd backs off.

GINA
 (she bows to the crowd)
 Selam Allyukim!

SAM
 You speak Arabic?

She pulls a language book out of her pocket and slips it to Sam.

GINA
 Five easy lessons. Read!
 (in Arabic to the crowd)
 Allah has sent us to protect you.

One of the warrior men tries to get a closer look at Gina under her hooded robe. Jumpy, Gina reaches into her shoulder bag and throws something at him.

GINA
 (in Arabic)
 Get back!

Allan's plastic eyeball rolls out to a halt. The crowd parts.

CROWD

Evil Eye.

SAM

(whispering in her ear)
I hope you know what you're
doing...

GINA

(to Sam)
You got a better idea?
(to the crowd)
We are messengers of Allah...

An unconvinced MAN from the crowd steps forward and yells out!

MOROCCAN MAN

Prove it!!! Prove that you are
messengers of God...

CROWD

Al lah!! Al lah!!.....

Gina looks around, and pulls out the unopened package from the lab. She rips it open, revealing a blue/green rock which she holds up. She grabs the pigeon. Suddenly, the rock disappears from her hand as the pigeon magically appears in its place. The crowd is in awe....So is Gina.

GINA

(to Sam)
Let's go....they bought it!

The crowd bows Moslem style. Chin up, Gina walks through the spectacle. Sam follows with the backpack.

SAM

(to a man)
I'm just the luggage carrier...
(to Gina)
Where'd ya learn that trick?

GINA

I didn't....

Gina holds up the package, a note written across the front:
"Sample of gallium ash. It'll melt in your hand. Love,
Uncle Pete."

A safe distance away, they high-tail it around a corner.

EXT. CITY OF QUARAZAZAT - NIGHT

Rolf's jeep pulls up. He searches through the mulling throng.

EXT. MARKET PLACE - QUARAZAZAT - NIGHT

Jittery, Gina negotiates with a MOROCCAN to rent some horses while Sam loads their gear. She hands the guy a hundred dollars. He refuses. Sam shoves the rest of Gina's wad into the man's hands and the Moroccan flashes a bank robber's smile.

EXT. CITY OF QUARAZAZAT - NIGHT

Frantically, Rolf combs every passageway and alley when he is accosted by a group of seductive STREET DANCERS. He pries himself from their clutches, heading straight for the snare of THREE ruthless THIEVES.

EXT. MARKET PLACE - QUARAZAZAT - NIGHT

Sam mounts his horse. Gina does the same. Nostrils flaring Gina's horse bucks, as if spooked by something, tossing her to the ground. Sam rushes to her aid - that spark between them igniting again under shimmering moon light as he holds her near.

SAM

You alright?

GINA

Too bad my uncle Pete didn't have a ranch.

She nearly wants him to kiss her again. Rolf rounds the corner---

ROLF

Wait!!

Gina looks like she's just seen a ghost! Sam reaches for Yaska's gun, but Gina stops him.

SAM

(to Gina)
You know this guy?

Somehow Sam can tell that she does by the look on her face. He lets go---CLUNK!---she hits the ground.

GINA

Rolf????

ROLF

When I received your message, I
came as quickly as possible.

Taking her in his arms---

ROLF

Darling, I should have never let
you go.

SAM

Darling?

Suddenly, one of the THIEVES, badly bruised and beaten,
rolls out of the alleyway into view.

ANOTHER THIEF

with a gun, rounds the corner, yelling---

THIEF

(in French)

They stole my money!!!

The thief opens fire! Everyone scrambles for cover, Rolf
and Gina get separated.

Quickly, Sam pushes Gina onto her mount and rushes to mount
his own horse, but misses the stirrup. Then, over the horse
he goes, digging into the horse's sides while grabbing the
lead on Gina's horse.

SAM

Ha!!!! Ha!!!!

Rolf slaps some money across the Moroccan horse-seller's
palm. In one graceful leap, he mounts another horse. The
three of them disappear into darkness.

THE MOROCCANS

mount the remaining horses, guns blazing!!

EXT. ON HORSEBACK - NIGHT

Ducking a barrage of bullets, Sam fires his gun, knocking
one of the Moroccan's off his saddle---the man's horse
dragging the thief in the dirt. Rolf takes aim at the
thieves, questioning Sam.

ROLF

Who are you anyway?....

GINA

....A friend!

SAM
Who the hell are you?

ROLF
Her future husband.

He looks over at Gina---

ROLF
If she'll have me.

Gina is hit with a shock wave. Sam misses his target!

SAM
(cocky)
Those ledges are pretty thin up
there. Might get a little crowded!

Boom! Boom! Sam shoots again.

ROLF
I'm sure I can handle it.

Rolf shoots. Perfect hit. Two Moroccans fall dead off
their horses.

ROLF
I never hedge my bets.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAYBREAK

The horses trail a thin ledge overlooking a spectacular,
frightening view nearly 10,000 feet above ground. Gina
looks around. No temple in sight.

GINA
Can't we stop for a minute?

ROLF
Not if we plan to reach the top of
this mountain before Buchara!

SAM
What do you know about Buchara?

ROLF
(to Gina)
When Kelly contacted me in India,
he informed me of the entire
situation.

SAM
 (not buying it)
 We better try to make it to that
 ledge before sundown.

Rolf's horse struts up beside Sam.

ROLF
 Nice boots.

Sam screws up his face, mimicking Rolf as he rides off. Sam doesn't like this guy one bit.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER THAT DAY

After climbing for miles, the ledge widens, allowing the horses to gallop until they hit the next curve where they are forced to trot. In front, Sam signals them to stop! He dismounts, and walks over to the edge where it looks like there is the beginning of a bridge, then there is---

A LARGE ANCIENT TREE---

its branches stretching football fields into space with voluminous veins growing out of the cliffside. Below this obstruction, the trail begins again.

SAM
 Jesus!

Gina walks over to the edge and looks over, nearly paralyzed with fear.

ROLF
 I'll flip you for it, old man.

Sam doesn't appreciate being called "old".

SAM
 Heads!

Rolf tosses his silver dollar into the air. It's tails. Rolf smiles. Sam starts to have a look at the coin, but Rolf quickly sticks it in his pocket.

ROLF
 Bad luck, old man.

Sam is just about to smack Rolf. Gina is worried.

GINA
 (to Sam)
 What are you going to do?

Sam walks past Rolf, over to one of the horses where he removes an axe and a rope from his backpack.

SAM

We'll have to climb down.

Sam ties one end of the rope to a jutting tree stump and the other around himself. He inches over the cliff, grabbing onto one of the branches for support as he forges a path with the axe for the others to follow.

As Sam lowers himself down further, Rolf walks up to the edge of the cliff, stepping on the rope and taking up the slack.

ON THE CLIFF SIDE

Sam stops with a jerk, the rope above catching onto a tree branch above.

SAM

Hey, what's going on up there?

Rolf takes his foot off the rope, jettisoning Sam down towards a clump of pointy tree branches below.

Above, the rope snaps in two on a tree branch just as Sam grabs onto another branch for safety in the nick of time.

Carrying more rope, Gina rushes to Sam's aid. Rolf follows on her heels.

GINA

(Yelling to Sam)

Hang on!

Stepping in front of her---

ROLF

Gina. It's too risky.

GINA

But we can't.....

He glances over at Sam's backpack.

ROLF

Gina, I think he's working for Bucharra. I discovered this in his backpack.

Rolf hands Gina the same kind of ring Bucharra wears - a bull's head and a jackal's body. The expression on Gina's face is marked with disbelief, hurt and betrayal. Rolf removes the half urn from Sam's backpack.

ROLF

The urn must be worth a small fortune. Let's take it and leave, while there's still time!

Eyes darting from the ring to Rolf's eyes---

GINA

I'm not going without Sam!

Gina unravels the rope, ties it to the tree stump and readies to throw it out to Sam. Rolf tries to stop her.

ROLF

You're going to ruin everything!

She heaves the rope over the side, but it misses its mark. Sam desperately struggles to get it.

ROLF

lunges towards Gina---

ROLF

Gina, listen to me!..

Rolf plops his hand on her shoulder. Gina turns around, startled.

ROLF

I love you.

But Gina has already noticed the ring mark on his finger.

GINA

No you don't!

WHACK!

Gina belts him hard with a martial arts blow, knocking the half urn out of his hands and it rolls to the cliff side---

Rolf grabs hold of the sun/moon amulet around Gina's neck, pulling her with him as he goes for the urn. Suddenly, from behind, a FANTASTIC GIANT HAWK swoops down on them, viciously attacking Rolf.

Below, Sam nearly catches the swinging rope. CRRAACK! The tree branch Sam is holding breaks and sends him plunging in mid-air down the cliff side. He grabs onto another branch at the last minute.

WITH BLOODY HANDS

Rolf fights back the hawk as he struggles with Gina to get to the half urn.

SAM

nearly has his hands on the rope, and all of a sudden, his feet are touching ground. There is a tiny solid ledge just under his feet which he hadn't seen before. He sighs with relief, then realizes what kind of danger Gina is in.

THE HAWK

swoops over the urn, picking it up with its talons. Rolf takes a flying leap, grabbing onto the urn still clutched in the hawk's talons.

GINA

Rolf!!!

Gina tries to stop him, but it's too late.

A look of terror registers on Rolf's face as he soars through the air with the half urn clutched to his chest. Rolf's silver dollar falls out of his pocket, revealing it is "tails" on both sides.

Suddenly Rolf is gone, the hawk trailing him in space.

Gina's stomach wrenches.

GINA

(holding the amulet)

Damn!

(remembering Sam)

Oh, Sam!!

Gina rushes to the cliff edge. Sam tugs on the rope. It'll hold.

A WWII ARMY HELICOPTER

climbs alongside the mountain like a deadly terminator. Inside is Buchara, Yaska, Bones and a MOROCCAN MILITARY PILOT.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LEDGE - DAY

SAM

(yelling up to Gina)

Come on! It's the only way out!

On the mountain above, machine gun fire rips the rope to shreds.

INT. ARMY CHOPPER - DAY

The Moroccan pilot steers the chopper towards the mountain again as Buchara madly aims the machine gun.

BUCHARA

You won't get away from me this time. Bitch!!

In the back, Yaska snickers nervously. Bones silences him with a dirty look.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

POW!!

a rocket plows into the side of the mountain, and---

WHOOSH!!!

Gina looks over the cliff and jumps below, where---Sam catches her on the ledge. She offers a thankful smile.

SAM

What about Rolf?

GINA

(solemn)

He's dead. I killed a man.

SAM

He was working for Buchara, anyway.

GINA

How did you know?

SAM

Intuition.

He smiles. The flame in her eyes tells him how much she cares.

In the stone cliff ahead, is a small indentation which gives way to pitch black. Sam's flashlight reveals it is some kind of arched tunnel so low that they must crawl through on their hands and knees.

INT. ARMY CHOPPER - DAY

Yaska loses control and his nervous laugh becomes a roar.

YASKA

Guess she did it to you again, boss.

Ready to explode, Buchara wallops him. Hard!

BUCHARA

Shut up! You stupid shit!!!

Yaska sneers through bleeding teeth.

INT. TUNNEL - DAY

Crawling on hands and knees, Sam and Gina quickly make their way through the tunnel which narrows into a funnel shaped opening with walls as smooth as polished steel. Ahead is a faint glimmer of light.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Yaska is lowered down by cable to the ledge where Sam and Gina entered the tunnel. He steps down, the cable swings, and his foot steps off---

YASKA

(crossing himself)

Holy Mary, Mother of God!

The cable swings back. Yaska touches ground.

INT. TUNNEL - DAY

Yaska's gunfire bounces off steel walls. Sam and Gina pick up their pace but suddenly the tunnel seems to be moving backwards, as though they'll never reach the end.

INT. ARMY CHOPPER - DAY

Buchara notices a trail heading around the mountain directly behind where Yaska disappeared. He savors a venomous smile and sets the pilot on their new course.

INT. TUNNEL - DAY

BAM!

Yaska shoots at shadows. Sam and Gina move out of range and, suddenly, a horrific clinking sound turns their world upside down---the tunnel is spinning.

Terrified, Yaska drops his gun, holding on for dear life as the deadly tunnel spins out of control. A glimmer of light at the end seems to be getting smaller and smaller. The tunnel is closing in on Sam and Gina like the eye of a needle. Yaska is gaining.

Sam looks worried.

GINA
Think positive.

Gina and Sam slide towards the small opening where their bodies will surely be sawed in half. Then miraculously...

EXT. TUNNEL - DAY

SPLAT!

They are spat out, in front of---A GIGANTIC TWO-HEADED SNAKE (a real phenomenon) with four slithery tongues, anxious for new prey.

SAM
There, behind it. The road splits off!

Sam fires! Bam! Bam! Bam! - Bullets have no effect and the thing moves straight towards them. Instinctively, Gina clutches the amulet around her neck.

GINA
We must alter our perception of the truth.

From overhead, stalactites fall---

Gina jumps out of the way, and with no where else to go, she walks right through the snake, as if it were just an illusion of her mind.

A SNAKE HEAD

lunges for Sam as he totters near the cliff edge.

GINA
Sam! Look!

SAM

looks up, just as the snake is about to bite into him - it's either that, or go over the cliff. Sam takes a deep breath, closes his eyes, and walks ahead---amazed that he walks right through the image untouched.

SAM
Must be some kind of laser trick to scare off intruders.

Standing in front of the divided road---

GINA
What are we going to do? We only
have half the urn.

SAM
(nervous)
I knew this was gonna happen.

GINA
I have a hunch we should go right!

SAM
I have a hunch we should go left!

Their eyes meet. Sam looks at her for a long time, shrugs,
then gives in.

SAM
Come on!

They head down road to the right.

EXT. TUNNEL - DAY

It's stopped spinning, but Yaska's brains haven't. He
stumbles out, hair sticking straight up on ends, and---

YASKA
AAAAHHHHAAA!!!!

Yaska empties the machine gun as the two-headed snake makes
a lunge for him.

EXT. ARMY CHOPPER - DAY

Up ahead, Buchara spots a clearing in the road. The chopper
lands. Bones and Buchara get out, leaving the pilot behind.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Sam and Gina are running towards a dark lake which looks
like it is coated in thick oil. There is no other way out.

EXT. NARROW LEDGE - DAY

Plastered against the mountainside, Yaska drops his machine
gun, ready to die of fright.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Sam and Gina are up to their waists in thick gooey stuff.

SAM
 Just when I learn to trust my
 instincts.

Then, from behind, a swarm of fire flies appear, igniting a sea of fire, and driving them towards---

A METAL PLATFORM

with two bronze doors decorated with lion's heads, each with a heavy metal ring in its mouth. Frantically, Sam and Gina grab hold of each metal ring, trying to lift themselves out of the approaching flames and onto the platform. But the doors swing open and the platform disappears.

GINA
 Oh my God, I'm slipping!!

SAM
 Hang on!

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Buchara and Bones make their way through a spooky, blackened wilderness when an ANIMAL comes upon them---

HALF BEAST/HALF DEMON

It issues a hideous sound from hell. Bones readies his machine gun.

BUCHARA
 No! Wait!

Buchara walks straight towards the beast, his ring flashing in the animal's face until it vanishes into thin air.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRONZE DOORS - DAY

Gina's sweaty fingers struggle to hold onto the metal ring, the amulet around her neck visible once more as she looks down into a hot tub of bubbling oil beneath. Suddenly--

A VISION APPEARS TO GINA

No, it's a WOMAN---no, it's the DARK-SKINNED GODDESS from the Lost City, her arms outstretched as she ascends the steps of a beautiful temple, shrouded in iridescent light.

Gina looks again, thinking that maybe her mind is playing tricks, and the woman is gone---no, there she is again surrounded by a blinding white light, calling Gina to come to her.

Sam looks as though he can't hang on a moment longer.

FINGERS SWEATING---

Gina looks at the woman once more, then drops into the boiling oil, the thick gooey stuff splashing up around her, as an illuminated stairway appears beneath her feet. The same stairway where the goddess was standing---the boiling oil was only another illusion.

GINA

Sam! It's o.k! Let go!

Sam, hardly believing his eyes, drops onto the stairway between the open doors.

He too sees the magnificent light and gazes up the "stairway to heaven" where the brightness, emitting from a brilliant glass dome, turns the sky white.

SAM

It must be the original Sumerian temple.

Together, they race up the stairway, the light of illumination shining on their faces.

EXT. STAIRWAY - DAY

Midway up, the stairs split into two paths. Instinctively, Gina and Sam go to the left, a gate closing behind them. EIGHT GLASS DOORS, pulsing with a green glow stand before them.

A HOLOGRAM

of a Medussa-like figure (THE TEMPLE GUARDIAN) appears---

TEMPLE GUARDIAN

You now hold the Sacred Key.
Choose the right one and you shall
unlock the secrets of the
invisible.

(beat)

Choose wisely or you shall die.

The hologram disappears. Sam and Gina hear strange sounds like wheels clanking, the room begins to dim and is somehow getting smaller.

Gina is frozen.

SAM

What are you waiting for?

GINA

(in a trance)

I don't know.

Sam steps up to one of the doors. Through a tiny window, Gina can see the sun begin to eclipse the moon. The room becomes darker. Sam turns the door knob.

GINA

No! Wait!

WHOOSH!

Sam is suddenly sucked into a fierce howling wind.

Hanging onto the door hinge for dear life, Sam tries to pull himself out the wind.

Gina remains paralyzed by the eclipse, as we see the reflection of the sun crossing over the moon in the pupil of Gina's eye.

SAM

Gina!!! Gina! Wake up, Damn it!

THE DOOR HINGE

breaks off. Sam is sucked into darkness---the eclipse casts a shadow over the room, casting a faint light across the floor which illuminates a puzzle of strange zigzag markings.

Suddenly, Gina sees it---the DOUBLE HEADED SERPENT, the symbol of the DNA STRAND OF LIFE (and the Pro Tech data base logo from the lab) etched into the puzzle markings. She jumps to her feet and rushes to the open door.

GINA

Sam!

Sam is wedged onto the inside of the doorway as Gina reaches out to him.

GINA

You need to give me the half urn!

Fighting against the wind, Sam pulls the half urn out of his pocket and passes it to Gina.

She takes it, and quickly fits it sideways into an open space in the zigzag markings. It fits perfectly, completing the image of a snake with a jeweled eye.

The wind stops. Plop! The door closes.

Sam CRASHES to the floor which disappears beneath them, leaving them suspended in mid air. Suddenly, they find themselves inside a large glass dome with open windows.

Sitting on a pedestal, in a tiny niche on the altar, is a large LUMINOUS crystal rock where, on the end of its pointy tip, grows the living organism---

THE CHONDRIANA.

Gina reaches out to touch the object. Buchara and Bones, step out of the shadows, guns drawn.

BUCHARA

Right on time, this time.

Flashing his familiar evil smile---

BUCHARA

Your taste in men surprises me. I expected you to be here with Rolf.

SAM

Never send a boy to do a man's job.

BUCHARA

You two have a nasty habit of staying alive. Unlucky for you, Bones has never failed me. Tie them up!

GINA

You can have me, but let him go! He didn't want to come!

BUCHARA

How touching. But you two have interfered with my plans long enough!

The thundering roar of the Army chopper is heard outside. Holding his gun at their backs, Bones ushers them over to the altar into a narrow beam of light, and begins to tie them up.

BUCHARA

(looking at his watch)
The Sumerians were quite clever in constructing an elaborate alarm system, which, once you cross that light, should destroy the temple in about ten minutes.

The ground rumbles under their feet. Sam and Gina exchange a look.

GINA

(whispering)
You take Bones and I'll take Buchara.

SAM

Why do I have to have Bones?
You're the Karate expert.

Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep! Gina's beeper goes off. Sam looks down at the ground.

SAM

Oh, look at that....

Together, Sam and Gina bend over and simultaneously---

BACK KICK

Bones and Buchara, their weapons flying!

Sam sends Buchara skyrocketing across the room as he ROARS with painful rage.

Bones doesn't budge. He just stands there with a silly grin on his face, ready to break every bone in Gina's body.

GINA

(backing off)
Oh, shit!

WHAM!

Buchara hurls himself at Sam and lands him with a killer body blow. Bam!

SAM

Aaaahhhh!!!!

Sam is catapulted out the window.

Stuck in Bone's chokehold, Gina panics as Sam disappears through the window---gone! Terrified, Gina bites Bone's arm.

BONES
AAAHHHHAAAA!!!!

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Enraged, Bones twists Gina's arm behind her back.

Buchara revels in watching the battle.

WHAM!! Bones flips Gina over his head, landing on her back. Gina barely gets up when Bones strikes her down, knocking her backwards off her feet. Bones lunges after her, but Gina manages to push him off with her feet.

Standing now, Gina winds up for a blow to his neck. Bones hardly flinches. Gina goes for a blow to his stomach. Still nothing! Gina gathers all her strength, and with---

A WIDE SWEEPING MOTION

she goes for a blow to his knees just as Bones pulls out a gun. Whop! With a lucky move, Gina knocks the gun out of his hand. Amazed at herself, she dives for the flying gun.

Bones grimaces and makes a dive, too. Gina hits the ground, feeling a twinge of pain in her back. Bones lunges on top of her, and at the last second, she gets the gun---

BAM!

Gina shoots him, but he keeps coming. She shoots again! Bam! Bam! Bam! but he still keeps coming. She shoots until he drops. Gina twirls around, facing Buchara, holding a knife at her temple.

THUNK!

Buchara catches it in the back of the head with the urn.

BUCHARA
AAAHHH!!!!

As Buchara drops, we see Sam standing behind---his hands scathed and bloody from climbing up the side of the mountain.

SAM
Miss me?

Relieved, Gina smiles.

From behind, Bones suddenly resurrects and grabs Gina round her neck trying to get the gun. Gina twists and turns trying to get the gun down. The fighting match becomes a sort of dance. Sam tries to tackle Bones, but can't find an opening.

manages to pull the gun down to a tiny opening between her legs. She shoots again!

WIDE EYED---

Bones backpedals away from Gina, stunned that she's made a direct hit in his crotch, he falls - crunch! His neck assumes a 180 degree position as his head hits cement, and he tumbles down the winding staircase.

BUCHARA

revived, goes for Sam, hoping to rip his opponent apart with his bare hands.

BUCHARA

Errrrr!!!!

YASKA

looking like he's been tarred and feathered, staggers in. Half dead, Gina gets up---

GINA

O.k., I'm ready for anything...

Yaska raises his gun. Suddenly, the zigzag markings on the floor come alive with slithering snakes.

BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM!

He uses up all his ammo on the snakes. With a smirky grin, Gina raises her weapon---click! click! It's empty!

GINA

Uh, oh!

Beat up and exhausted, Gina takes another fighting stance at Yaska.

BUCHARA'S POLISHED BOOT

kicks Sam hard and sends him flying, backwards, out the window. Arms windmilling through the air, Sam stops himself by grabbing onto the inside window casing.

Buchara charges at Sam. Wham! He nearly busts his head on Sam's bent knees.

Gina clunks Yaska on his head with her gun. Suddenly---

A BOLT OF LIGHTENING

strikes and sizzles the floor. From the smoke, a BEAUTIFUL, HALF-NAKED YOUNG WOMAN appears like something out of a dream. Yaska wakes up.

Seductively, the woman calls Yaska over with her finger.

WOP!

Yaska is taken by surprise when he steps into a net of light, and it flings him up to the ceiling, splattering him like a roach on the top. Thwack! Something falls out of his pocket.

Gina steps on a girlie magazine with the same young woman on the cover, using the same gesture. In disbelief, she shakes her head, smacking her hands together meaning: "Hey, I'm all done."---

GINA

(to Sam)

Will you come on!!!

In mid swing, Sam turns to her---

SAM

I'm right...

WHACK!

Buchara gets Sam right across the jaw---

SAM

....behind you!.....

Sam's knees go limp and he falls, his head dropping out the window. With superhuman strength, Buchara jumps on him.

Gina checks around, trying to find a way to help Sam. Holding the amulet around her neck, she suddenly gets an idea.

WITH HIS HEAD BENT BACKWARDS OUT THE WINDOW,

Sam desperately struggles against Buchara's deadly stranglehold. Buchara removes a pen from his suit jacket and punches the top---a twirling blade pops out--maliciously he goes for Sam's face.

SAM

turns his face away....noticing over a 20,000 foot drop.

Eyes closed, Gina takes a leap of faith and steps into the brilliant dome of light spilling down from the ceiling.

THE TWIRLING BLADE

takes a nick out of Sam's leg.

SAM

AAHH!

Sam falls leaving Bucharra the perfect opportunity to pounce. This time he goes for Sam's heart.

BUCHARA

Dead men tell no tales!

THUNK!

Gina opens her eyes and a luminous coil of rope has materialized out of the light in front of her. Terrified, she knows what she must do---

GINA

Shit! I need to make a career move!

She nervously grabs onto the rope---

WHAM!!!!!!

Swinging on the rope, Gina soars through the air and kicks Bucharra from behind, knocking his head down---Bucharra loses hold of the blade, ripping open his own throat from ear to ear.

BUCHARA'S

severed head flies out the window and lands---

On the front window of the chopper, scaring the pilot to death. He loses control, exploding the chopper on the mountainside.

EXT. TEMPLE OF ILLUMINATION - DAY

Swinging on the rope like a pendulum Gina gets a look at the scary view below.

GINA

Aaahhhh!!!

The rope swings back into the Temple of Illumination. And plunk! Gina drops from the rope, nearly breaking her neck.

The ground trembles beneath them. Sam looks at his watch.

SAM

I don't think we have much time left! Come on!

EXT. TEMPLE OF ILLUMINATION - DAY

A great chasm opens up under the mountain. The temple begins to sink.

INT. TEMPLE OF ILLUMINATION - DAY

Sam checks out the window.

Gina rushes up to the niche and tries to pick up the organism, but it's too hot to touch. She searches around, rips off a piece of her blouse, and gently removes the organism, wrapping it in the cloth.

GINA

Sam! What about the book?!

Quickly Sam searches around the niche, then the altar, he can't find a thing. Then he spots A SMALL SARCOPHAGUS from which he clears away the cobwebs, an inscription written on the side.

GINA

What is it?!

SAM

(upset)

It says the Book of the Shrine was removed from here in 4000 B.C. and taken to the High Priestess of Dahra.

Carved across the front of the tomb is the now familiar picture of the sun and the moon, beside another inscription: "High Priestess of Dahra".

THE LIGHT

from the ceiling has opened a hole in the floor, intensely shooting down the mountain shaft to the ground. The temple is sinking faster and faster!

GINA

Come on!

EXT. TEMPLE OF ILLUMINATION - DAY

The mountain is quickly being sucked into a deep underground hole.

INT./EXT. TEMPLE OF ILLUMINATION - DAY

Sam and Gina, not knowing what to do, peer out the window, when---

A CHOPPER

with a MOROCCAN PILOT, Kelly, and Lady inside, suddenly appears alongside the window. They wave. An ATTENDANT lowers down a cable with a seat attached and two parachutes.

INT. TEMPLE OF ILLUMINATION - DAY

At the window, Gina yells out to Kelly as she and Sam don the chutes.

SAM
(to Kelly)
You're late.

GINA
How'd you find us?

KELLY
I never did trust your taste in men, so I followed Rolf.

Sam winks at Kelly and grabs hold of the cable.

SAM
(to Gina)
You first.

GINA
No, you go first.

SAM
(through clenched teeth)
This is no time to argue about it!

Another jolt nearly knocks them down.

SAM
Alright, you made me do it!

He takes the cable, grabs Gina, and swings out the window.

EXT. TEMPLE OF ILLUMINATION - DAY

Sam is strapped in the cable seat with Gina in his lap.

WHOOSH!

With light streaming out of the ground, the mountain is suddenly enveloped with a kind of super-sonic tremor as it sinks---a harsh wind sucking up the cable and Sam can't believe his eyes as---

Gina is sucked out of her seat, into the light.

GINA

Heeyyy!!!!

Gina pulls the cord, the chute SHOOTS UP, but DOESN'T OPEN!!!!!!

GINA

Oh, my God!

Panic stricken, Gina keeps pulling on the cord.

SAM

lurches out the window.

KELLY

What are you gonna do?

SAM

I'll figure it out when I get there.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Sam skydives towards Gina, fighting against the harsh wind coming from the mountain. Sam gains momentum, desperately attempting to reach her as---

THE MOUNTAIN

is suddenly sucked into a deep hole which closes up. Bingo! Gina's parachute opens up. Arms outstretched, Gina grabs onto Sam just in time. Together, they float down to safety.

GINA

(breathlessly)

Are all relationships this hard?

CUT TO:

INT. ISMAIL'S SHOP - DAY

MICROSCOPIC IMAGES

of Chondriana cells (magnified by 50,000 times) are being viewed on a huge video screen. Gina, Sam, Courtney, Ismail and Kelly are watching.

GINA

(pointing)

Look how perfectly the mother cell of the Chondriana reproduces itself, multiplying into millions within an hour.

CORTNEY

(eating a sandwich)

But how does it kill the disease?

GINA

It doesn't. It restructures it.

(pointing)

The mother cell picks up the vibrational frequency of the diseased tissue and transmits it to millions of her offspring.

(beat)

They then surround the root of the disease, absorb the diseased tissue, recycle it, and spit out healthy new cells.....

KELLY

So you were right! There is intelligence in cells, even at the microscopic level.

ISMAIL

You have truly given the world a great gift.

Lady scampers in the door from the garden, licking Kelly to death.

KELLY

Hey, you! Will ya chill!

Everyone laughs.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The group passes Alan in the hallway, talking on his cellular phone.

ALAN

Yes, sir. I'll get on it right away.

He spots Gina, and runs along side her to talk---

ALAN

Oh, Gina, uh, Dr. Kramer. Congratulations, job well done.

They shake.

ALAN

We're moving you into a bigger office next week... with your name on the door!...And there's a little problem in Brazil...

GINA

Not now, Alan.

Sam shrugs his shoulders at Alan. Gina walks outside.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Hundreds of Indian children have gathered in the garden, and as Gina and the group approaches----

A CHORUS OF VOICES

sing out---

CHILDREN

Thank you, Gina!

Gina spots Sam standing on the sideline with Melik, orchestrating this little chorus---tears filling her eyes.

Melik rushes towards Gina, throwing herself into her heroine's arms.

MELIK

Now I can grow up to be just like you.

As Gina holds Melik, she feels a bond, a sense of freedom and joy like she's never felt before. Sam hugs them both. He looks down at Melik, smiling up at him---

SAM

(to Gina)

Say...ever think about having kids?

Eyes going wide---Gina looks over at Sam like---"Oh, my God, never!!"

GINA

Oh, I'm a lousy cook. I'd make a terrible mother.

Sam takes her into his embrace.

SAM

No, you wouldn't.

GINA

Yes, I would.

The children cheer and wave as Sam and Gina walk arm and arm into the sunset.

SAM

Alright then, I'll cook.

Sam tosses his hip flask over his shoulder.

FADE OUT.

THE END.

OVER CREDITS:

IN THE LAB---

MICROSCOPIC IMAGES

of the Chondriana appear on screen.

GINA

Amazing how the female originates in the nucleus without any fertilization from the male...

Sam looks into the camera and winks.

BLACK SCREEN:

Chondriana was discovered by Dr. Merkle, a nuclear physicist, in 1991. It is still awaiting FDA approval.